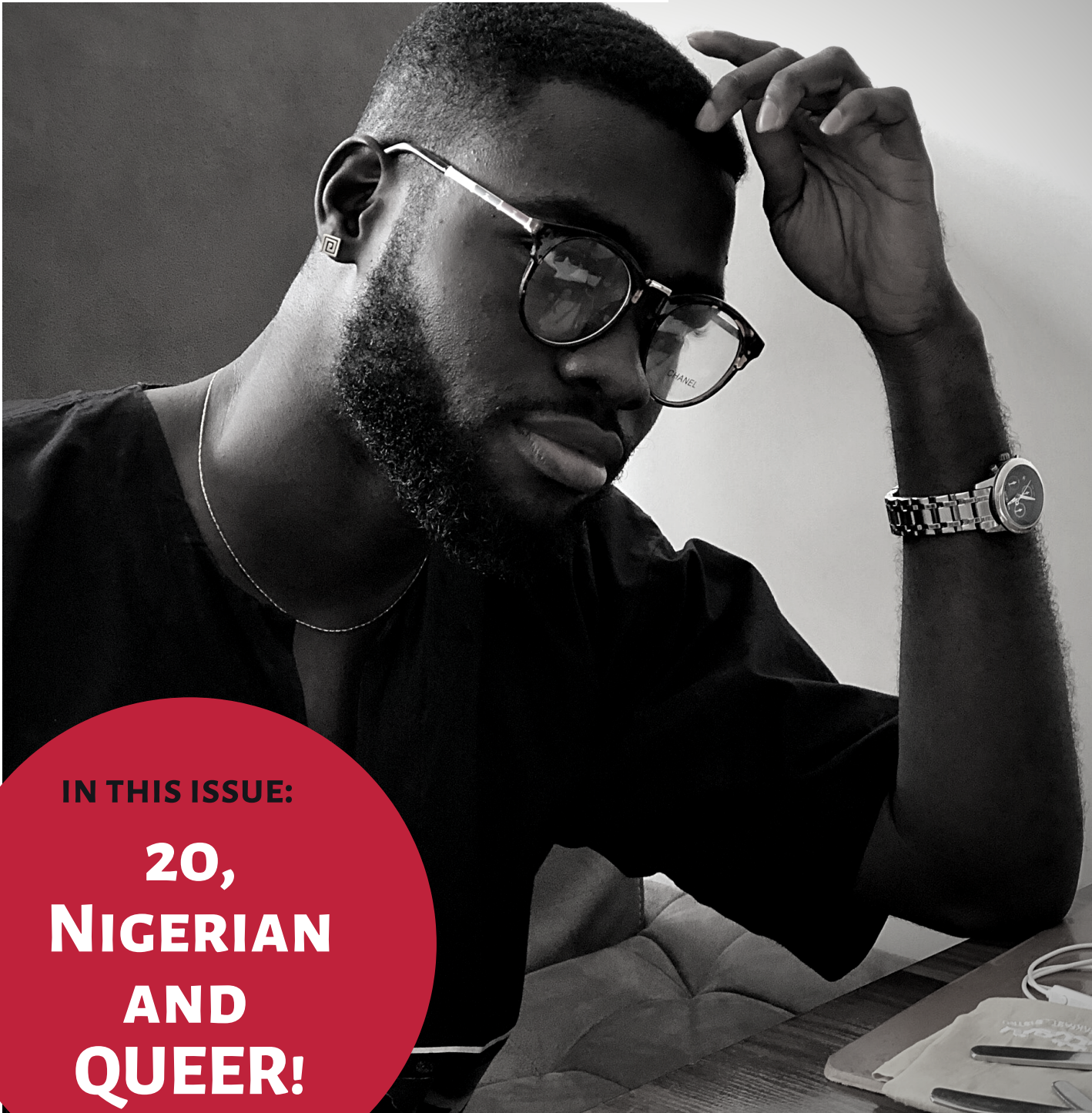


hints

MAG

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EDITOR'S NOTE

OLOTU FUNKE

I am happy that I am part of the change that is happening in Nigeria with the LGBTI+ community.

It's one that celebrates love and togetherness, I hope the voices of the LGBT community will continue to be heard.

Our desire at hints is that we get to a place where everyone can tell their stories regardless of how mainstream media perceives it.

LADIES CORNER

ODEJIMI OLASUNKANMI



Birds do it and bees do it, women have hormones and sex drives, just like the males out there. But, the question, 'should I have sex on the first date?' is a burden on women more so than men. Women are placed under a lot of pressure to strictly control the pace of a relationship, restricted by the dilemma of to have sex on the first date or not to. The popular adage "why buy the milk if you can get the cow for free" makes matters worse. This horrid imagery keeps rearing its vile antiquated head. It is crazy that in this day and age, some women still think that being sexual when and how she wants means she can't find love as a proper lady.

So, is first-date sex really a no-no for women? As an answer to the question, I have come to realise that it is dependent on the woman and what she wants. Getting naked on the first date might not just be your thing. But it shouldn't be because you feel restricted and ashamed at the thought of exploring your sexual desire. Or, that you don't want to ruin a potential good relationship. Do you think that all the couples you see who have been in a loving relationship for quite some time are that way because they waited at least three dates to have sex? Of course, No! Whether you sleep with someone within 30 minutes of meeting them or you wait forever, there is no guarantee that it will evolve into a long-term relationship, so just do what you really want. Moreover, why should you feel restricted from satisfying sexual urges unlike the male counterpart? I mean, the world is less sexist than it used to be. Most women tend to think that men think less of a woman who has sex on the first date but the truth is most men don't think that way. Though there are some creeps who will hold your sexuality against you, but who cares? You wouldn't want to go all the way with such a person.

The bottom line is it's perfectly okay to sleep with someone on the first date if you so desire. And, it's also fine to sleep with someone after thousands of dates. The important thing is that you do you, not bothered about vile sayings or ruining a good relationship.



Home is Where the Heart is

Words by

ODEJIMI OLASUNKANMI

Ivan undid the last wrap of bandage wrapped around his shoulder and winced as he lowered himself into the wooden tub half filled with water.

The dimly lit room, illuminated only by the moonlight seeping through the windows at opposite sides, and the feel of warm water soothing his old and new battle scars, was just the way he liked to spend the rest of the night, brooding on the past and the present.

Not for once had he ever imagined that he would abandon his position as the heir to his father's estate at the age of twenty-one. But then, he had fallen in love with a girl whose values rested on being with a man who didn't have the world handed to him on a platter of gold.

So, drunk in love and in desire to please his betrothed, he left everything behind and joined the Bulgarian army with the promise to come back home as soon as he had proved himself, to marry her and take over the estate as the rightful owner.

But here he was, ten years and eight scars later, in an unpopular brothel buried in the outskirts of Mumbai, after they were dismissed to go home to meet with their families.

Although, she dumped him and got married to the heir of a glass merchant, he didn't quit the army. Each victory and each defeat, reminded him that, like life, love too was a battle. The wounds were a representation of betrayal and the scars, healing.

The sound of feet walking softly on the worn out carpeted floor interrupted his deep thoughts. He closed his eyes in content as warm hands stroked his neck and slid upwards to manage his scalp. It trailed down his ears to his shoulders to finger the burgundy threaded mark shaped like the letter 'L'.

He flinched at the touch; he was still sour. But the giver was compassionate. She sensed his pain and pressed her warm lips to it while her hands crawled towards his taut muscle, to bring it to rest.

The nightly ritual was almost complete. In that position, they would lay for hours. She would trail her hands over his betrayal reminders, and he would explain how he got them. In return, she would kiss it and ask the gods for quick recovery.

To him, nothing was more intimate than that. He didn't need a woman's love anymore. The comfort her gentle hands gave was enough to last him a lifetime and another life.

Every night, in her crooked English she asked and every night he answered, as if his entire existence depended on it.

AFTER DARK CHRONICLES

18+

Lady Ruth

Arthur had brown eyes that looked for mine anytime we made a video call.

We were talking about seeing each other, and he suggested a facetime.

I had ugly break-outs on my face and told him.

He replied as smoothly as always, 'Shh, you know you are beautiful Ruth, I don't care what's wrong with your skin. I want to see you.'

He was a confidence booster, always knew the right thing to say. And he couldn't wait for me to give him a reply before his video call request came. I picked up.

He had the most charming smile that made way for a perfect set of teeth to flaunt their selves.

'How are you, Ruth? His face covered my screen.

The baritone voice sent chills down my spine. It had the right amount of roughness, sexiness, accent, and boldness. Arthur had a voice that demanded to be listened to, and my body listened.

I'm fine, how are you? I said shyly, going to get a tripod.

'I like your sweater' he said.

'Really? Thank you. My mom got it for me.'

'I like how it hugs your perky boobs.' he winked.

Arthur is such a sexual being – much like me – only that he's more forward than I.

I adjusted my phone on the tripod, till I was satisfied with the framed portrait view.

'So, when are we seeing, Ruth?' he asked.

'I resume school in two weeks. That's the only way I get to spend the night with you.'



I heard footsteps and ended the call quickly.

My mom came into my room and asked who I was entertaining on the phone at this hour of the night.

'Sharon,' I said with a straight face. She had no comment.

Everyone at home knows Sharon as my best friend.

'Goodnight; and church service is by 7 am tomorrow, don't make me wake you!'

'Okay, ma. Goodnight.'

I returned to my phone and messaged Arthur on WhatsApp, apologized for ending the call abruptly.

His reply: " The things I will give, just to have you in my arms, to squeeze you and kiss you."

I typed back: "I wish I were with you also. I'll love to bite your lips."

Arthur: "You're a biter! Freaky little thing."

Me: "I love biting things, I hope you don't mind."

Arthur: "Me? Hell no. Bring it on?"

Me: "Great! Brown sugar, tell me what you'll do to me if I was there with you now."

Arthur: "I'll kiss you gently, your lips, to your ears, down your neck, biting you gently. Grab you by your waist, look into your eyes to see the craving for me. I'll use my fingers inside you, water you up for what's about to come. I look into your eyes and watch you moan until you weaken in my arms, then kiss you some more."

A great pool of sweat began to form below my full breast and trickle down into my belly button, creating a tingly sensation.

To be continued.....

THE STORY OF THE NIGERIAN QUEER ACTIVIST

It is not news that Queer Nigerians are standing up for their rights and it is interesting to watch, on this Edition of hints magazine we interviewed Vincent Desmond, a writer and founder the Digital publication Dear Queers.

A quick introduction about you?
I once asked the question 'what is my brand?' on Twitter and from the results I gathered that my personal brand is something along the lines of " A Beyoncé loving queer writer who writes and talks about being queer a lot and fashion". and I think that is the most accurate description of my personal brand I have ever gotten.



So, my name is Vincent Desmond, I am a fashion and culture journalist who writes and talks a lot about what my life and experiences as a queer person living in Nigerian who tweets about Beyoncé a little too much.

What's the motivation behind Dear Queers?

When I was younger and experiencing puberty as a queer man, I had so many questions and there was pretty much nowhere to get answers. Everyone around me was cis and straight, almost everything on TV was cis and straight, no one gave me the queer version of a sex education, no one introduced me to literature that had characters like me. When I started Dear Queers, I wanted to create a publication that helped other queer people especially younger queer people navigate this predominantly cis and straight world. Even if it's just by putting them on a playlist of music by other queer people, or uplifting voices of other LGBTQ+ people or starting conversations. Our lives are hard enough, I want to make it easier, so I created Dear Queers.

What unique milestone has Dear Queers achieved as it relates to the objective of the brand?

Almost every other day, I get a DM from someone talking about how grateful they are the platform exists, or how they can relate to a particular article or a post starts a very interesting conversation online and that makes me happy because Dear Queers is meant for other queer people to engage with, learn from, and relate to and honestly, it does that. And I am very happy about that.

What does it mean to be an openly queer man in Nigeria?

It kind of means a lot. For me, being openly but most importantly visibly queer in Nigeria means being ready for homo/queerphobia in real life and online. It is scary. I constantly have Nigerians clogging up my notifications on Twitter telling me vile and homophobic things and most days, I don't care but somedays, what they say strikes a nerve. Other days, they take it up the notch and make threats that leave me worried. In real life, it is easier to handle because it doesn't escalate more than the other members of my department making jokes about my being and acting like a woman (I think, this is because I am not really friends with or hang with straight people a lot). But it also means liberation, it means living unapologetically, I live my life as authentically as possible and I love it. I know if I die today, I at least lived. I lived my truth.



Do you think people are born queer or choose to be queer?

I think whatever happened to straight people that made them straight is what happened to queer people that made us queer. I personally don't remember choosing, I just remember being queer and knowing I was queer. If it was a choice, I doubt many would choose to be queer knowing and seeing how much hate and violence we are subjected just for our identities. When did it dawn on you, the reality of your queer sexuality? I personally don't remember not knowing I was queer. I just didn't know the word for it when I was younger. By the time I was six, I had found my label, by accident, in one of those mini dictionaries and I knew it was correct. I remember telling my cousins, they laughed of course. I think even though I figured it pretty early, the people around me had figured it out earlier that I wasn't straight because I was always different. The kids at school for one knew.

How did you come out to the people that mattered (parents, friends) and at what point did you consider this necessary?

The first time I came out to anyone, it was my best friend in secondary school. I was maybe eleven, I kind of just said it to be honest and he just accepted it. The last time, I had to 'come out' was when I came out to my mum and I sat down and tried to have a conversation about what it means to be a queer (keyword here being tried). In case you're wondering, she was very homophobic so there's that. I don't think I came out in the traditional sense to anyone else including my boss, course mates and friends because I am not in a closet. If you ask, I tell you, I am really open about it.

Can you describe your worst homophobic experience and how did you come out of that?

I can't say what my 'worst homophobic experience' was but it could be when I was in Benin Republic and my course mates would routinely make jokes about me being gay, and referred to me as a girl and when the class was to be divided according to gender, they told me to go to where 'the other girls' were. I think what made it bad was that it didn't stop, it just started and never stopped until I dropped out (for other reasons). It was how casual it was; I could be having a great day and someone would make a joke reminding me that I was 'not a real man' maybe because of my femininity or something of the sorts. Eventually, it led to me spiraling and becoming depressed as well is one of the major reasons I am anti-social.

Has being queer affected or hindered you from practicing your religion in anyway?

Being queer makes you look at things differently, religion is one of those things. When you've spent your whole life being told that God hates you because you are an abomination, being religious may not come easily. Personally, I was born into a Christian home but at nineteen, I don't quite know if I am a Christian or agnostic. My queerness may have not hindered me from being a Christian, but it made me question Christianity and organized religion because why would God who is love condemn me for being me?

What do you think about Bisexuality?

My opinion about bisexuality doesn't matter. I am nowhere on the bisexual spectrum, so my opinion on bisexuality doesn't or shouldn't matter. Bisexuals are valid, bisexuality is valid even though a good number of the rest of the queer community doesn't see them that way and most straight people invalidate their sexuality and tell bisexual people that they are just gay when they aren't.

What notion do you hope would change about how people perceive homosexuals?

Homosexuals are hypersexualized by the media, by straight people and by everything. People always reduce us to our sexual activities and that is very dehumanizing because while there isn't anything wrong with sex but our lives don't begin and end with sex, we are human beings and I frankly want the notion that homosexuality begins and ends with who you sleep with.

Have you been physically assaulted from being gay?

The closest I have come to being physically assaulted for being gay has to be when I was bullied in primary school. As an adult, I have never been assaulted physically. I think I have been really lucky because I know people who have horror stories to tell.

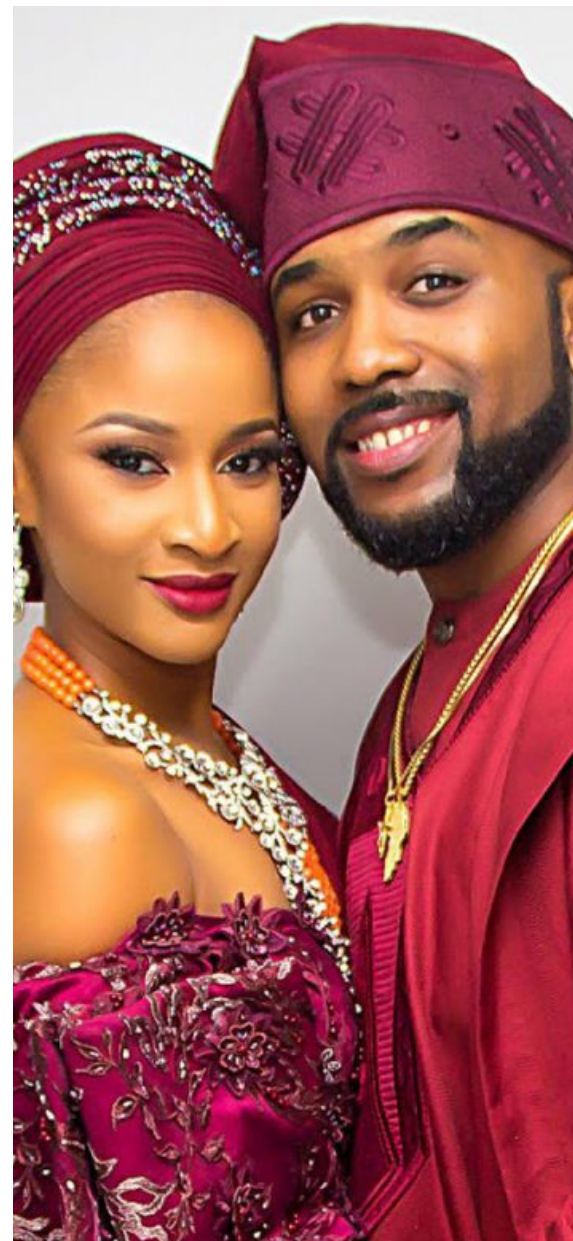
If there is someone out there looking to come out but is afraid, what advise will you give them?

Everyone's coming out is different and unique to themselves and their journeys but one thing I'll say is: pace yourself, ensure you're ready. Coming out doesn't magically make things better or easier so make sure you're ready and you are coming out for yourself and no one else

HINTS TOP 05

TOP 5 CELEBRITIES WHOSE MARRIAGE SHOCKED US.

Over the years, celebrities from all parts of the world have warmed our hearts by getting hitched with someone we have always wished they were together, most of which take us through the entire process - From the proposal, to the engagement and finally, the wedding. However, some of these celebrities would be perfect working for the CIA, as they had completely put us in the dark about their relationships until the wedding bells chimed. Below, we give you the top 5 celebrities who managed to keep their love life under the wraps till marriage.



KEMI 'LALA' AKINDOJU & CHEF FREGZ

Without any form of competition, these couple has bagged the first place on our list. Popular on the TV cooking show 'Knorr Taste Quest' as a Chef judge, Fregene AKA Fregz is one who knows how to keep the dough in the wraps, alongside the 31 year old 'Dazzling Mirage' actress. They did it so well, until we were shocked with a pre-wedding shoot by TY Bello, followed by a lavish wedding on 16th September, attended by close families and celebrity friends alike.

Unlike many others who captioned their wedding theme with half of their names and half of their partners', they went with the hashtag 'Asewereniseoluwa', which means 'The Lord works with ease'.

Even till now, we can testify to how easeful their life is, as we hardly hear any news nor see pictures of these two flaunting their love in our faces.



ADESUA ETOMI &

BANKY W

We were not done gawking at the romantic vibe they shared with us in the successful movie 'The Wedding Party', when these two hit us with the sweetest, but most shocking romance reveal on Instagram.

Both parties uploaded a picture of Banky on his knees, proposing to Susu, accompanied by a lengthy caption, explaining how he had been stalking and asking questions about her until he found the courage to slid into her DMs in 2015.

The surprising part was, it had been two years before the big reveal, yet we had no clues about it. After the release of the romantic movie they were both casted as lovers, their fans just had mere speculations that they would have been perfect for each other in the real world.

The 'real' wedding party took place in Cape Town, South Africa on 25th November 2017 with the caption #BAAD2017. We can't get enough of this couple as they continually show love and support for each other on every social media platform.



ZAINAB BALOGUN & DIKKO

NWACHUKWU

For someone whose life revolves around social media due to her brand as a TV presenter and a Nollywood actor, you would expect Zainab Balogun to be one, of whose love life would be a movie shown across the continent for free.

However, the reverse was the case. There were no informations whatsoever about how they met, when they started dating and all that juicy stuffs.

We only heard about it when Zainab posted a picture on the day of their traditional wedding which was 14th May 2018. As a cue, popular blogs starting dishing out pictures from the event, where we saw her heartthrob for the first time, who turned out to be Dikko Nwachukwu, founder and CEO of Jetwest Airline, widower and father of two kids.

Since the cat was let out of the bag, we thought we would be seeing more of the couple. But Zainab made it clear that her marriage was off limits for social media, as she didn't post any pictures with her husband on their honeymoon in Thailand.



SIMI & ADEKUNLE

GOLD

From 'Orente' to 'No forget', they had been giving us solid hints about their 6 years relationship. However, each time we came close to the truth, Falz would come along to distract us.

There were enough evidences online, with pictures that dated back to 2012 of them in a mushy fashion, but we still wanted to hear the confirmation right from their own mouths.

Did they let us know? You answered correctly! They continued to punish us by refusing to comment on the speculations, right until Simi's concert in 2018 when Adekunle kissed her fully on the lips, in front of their fans.

Still, when traditional marriage pictures filtered on the web on 9th January, 2019, many were left stunned. They managed to keep their affairs private to the very last rites, with the wedding that consisted of only 300 guests in attendance.

Many fans expressed deep disappointments as to the secrecy, but the playful couple were so unbothered. Their union is one match made in Musical Heaven.



LINDA EJIOFOR & IBRAHIM SULEIMAN

Asides the fact that Linda is Adesua's bestie, their love story is also almost similar.

The ever smiling and charming couple were casted together as lovers on award winning TV series 'Tinsel' in 2015, and there are speculations that, perhaps the seed of love was first planted on the set.

As if she took a cue from her bestie, Linda remained quiet about her relationship until November 2018, when her fans and the general public woke up to pre-wedding photographs Linda uploaded herself.

Not long after, more pictures of her bachelorette party filtered online, giving us a hint of the coming wedding. So it was no surprise (maybe a little) when November 8 ushered in the beginning of forever for the amazing couple despite their totally different religion and culture (Linda being from Abia state and Ibrahim from Kaduna state).

During their honeymoon, the couple couldn't stop gushing over themselves, and trust me, we felt the love too.



HINTS REVIEWS

THE CURIOUS CASE OF BOBRISKY



GAY?
TRANS?
WHO IS HE/SHE?

JULIE AKO

Idris Okuneye (27), a graduate of Unilag and popularly known as Bobrisky has been the subject of various discourse and controversies in the news.

Is Bobrisky gay? Is he a Trans? What and who is Bob?

However, to even attempt to give answers to any of these questions one must be open to the following concepts around this conversation:

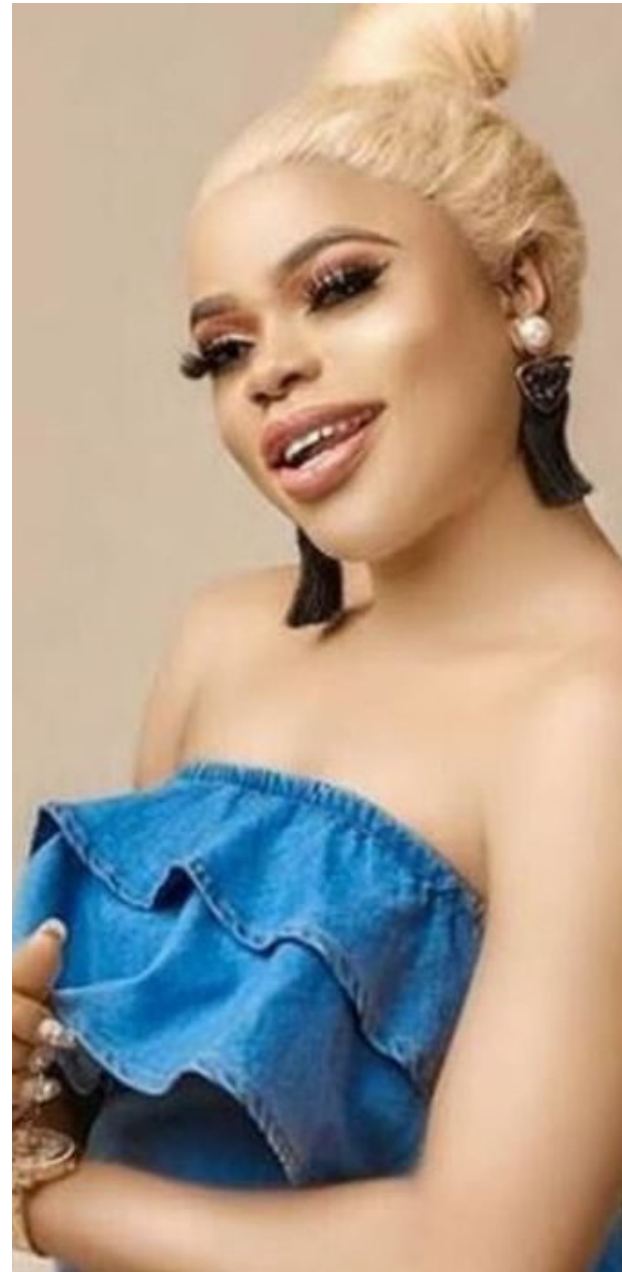
GENDER EXPRESSION

When you are born, the doctor assigns gender to you based on your body features.

As you grow, one begins to culturally exhibit what they consider a personal expression of that gender. This is called gender expression.

Therefore, not every one of the same sex express it the same – giving rise to different social expressions in names, dressing, pronoun choices, etc.

The habits and characteristics of individuals leading up to the use of adjectives like masculine, feminine, androgynous and everything in between.



GENDER IDENTITY & BIOLOGICAL SEX

Gender identity is a much fuller philosophy as it deals with the internal knowledge and perception of oneself.

That is, how a person sees his or herself regardless of what is on the gender lines of their birth certificates.

Africans typically have a gender binary – the assumption that there are only two genders, male or female (biological sex). And it is physically verifiable by the eyes.

Research has shown the blurriness between these distinct categories causing a lot to rethink what they consider to be their gender identity.

TRANSGENDER vs. SEXUAL ORIENTATION

Transgender people are people whose gender identity is different from the gender assigned to them at birth.

So, some person labelled male or female at birth could turn out to ascribe different sex to themselves.

A transition from one gender to the other could be a lifelong process – from overcoming stereotypes, fighting social stigmatization and finally physical transition.

With our case study, Bobrisky, who started as a cross-dresser before showing shreds of evidence of biological transformation, one can identify processes of a trans that makes us begin to consider the possibility of more like her out here.

Social transitioning – this happens in the way you dress, how you ask to be addressed, and in coming out to close friends about your gender identity.

Biological transitioning – a transgender person may not necessarily transition because it is quite expensive or they can't deal with the attention of societal scrutiny.

Noteworthy; this has nothing to do with one's sexual orientation (meaning the sex to whom a person is attracted.)

A Trans-female who is attracted to a male cannot be referred to as gay even though they were assigned male at birth.

Also, when confused about what pronoun to use in addressing Bobrisky or any Trans you know, the best way is to call them by what they identify as (in Bobrisky's case: SHE). Or ask how they prefer you addressed them. Societal constructs made it hard to be receptive of people's dilemmas and struggles and respect their submissions. And an openly trans person has courageously surpassed the hurdles of criticism and stereotypes to teach us something very crucial about life – Be yourself.

This is why with Bob, identifying opening as Nigeria's first Trans woman she is no longer such a risky role model after all.

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