



Dami and Niyi say having a good sense of humor keeps their marriage strong.

# 20s

**DAMI & NIYI  
OKUBOYEJO  
MARRIED JULY 2010**

“I was never a guy who swept girls off their feet,” admits 28-year-old Niyi, laughing. “It was like, *Am I going to die alone?*” Then one day in the fall of 2005 he saw Damilola walking around the campus of the University of Houston. “She just didn’t look like the other girls,” says Niyi, now a fashion designer in Manhattan. “There was something very intriguing about her. She was a mystery.” He learned that she moved from New Orleans in 2005 after her family lost nearly everything in Hurricane Katrina.

Damilola, 23, who now teaches in Brooklyn, was not nearly as impressed with Niyi. “I saw him and just burst out laughing,” she recalls. “I asked my sister, ‘Who is that guy who seems to be trying so hard?’” Sporting tailored suits when everyone else on campus wore jeans, “He just seemed out of place in Houston,” she says. “My sister and I called him ‘Omo Britiko,’ which means British boy in Yoruba.” Unaware that Damilola thought him odd, Niyi (pronounced Nee)

invited her to be his jogging partner. “Jogging is what I knew,” he says. Damilola surprised herself by accepting.

After their first date in November 2006 they realized they had more in common than they ever thought. When he was 14 and she was 13, their individual families had migrated from their native Lagos, Nigeria, to the United States. As Damilola got to know Niyi, her first impressions dissolved. That quirky sense of style started to seem polished and metropolitan. And what she originally mistook as social awkwardness now seemed sweet and fresh. “There was something about him,” says Damilola. “He was always nice, expressive, funny and really cute,” she recalls.

By July 2010, the two were ready to say “I do.” “I never imagined getting married, but I wasn’t against it either,” Damilola

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says. “Niyi came in my life because I was open to whatever God had planned for me.” As for Niyi, what he loves most about his wife is how well she understands him. “She was my first girlfriend,” he says. “She accepts my quirks.”

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