

June 2024  
Volume 04  
Issue 02

# Pride: Visualizing Our Invisibility



QUEER ETHIOPIA  
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Nishis - A quarterly magazine published by Queer Ethiopia focusing on LBQ issues

# QUEER ETHIOPIA

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“Queer Ethiopia” is an alternative space created by a group of queer Ethiopian women. It is designed to be a space for a diverse group of Ethiopian queer women whose sexual and gender identifications vary. It includes cis and trans women who may be lesbian, bisexual or asexual. This is a space where the experiences of queer people takes center stage. We hope to include personal experiences from our daily lives as queer people, various stories, interviews, original artwork and poetry. We hope it will also serve as a place where Ethiopians in Ethiopia and Ethiopians in the diaspora come as themselves to explore and create an online community.



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# From the Editors

We have taken a major departure in tone and format for this 12th issue of Nisnis.

We have chosen to do a zine because they have historically been a vital site of resistance and celebration for marginalized communities. Nisnis, in its more “formal” format, has always offered our community the space to tell our own stories. This zine, however, allows us to celebrate pride in a more fun and lighthearted manner.

As queer Ethiopians, our existence is about navigating the tricky balance of visibility and invisibility, alternating between the largely homophobic cisgender heterosexual community and our accepting, loving queer spaces. It can be draining to constantly hide.

But these pages transform our invisibility into unapologetic acts of visibility. We are claiming our truths, desires, and full, messy selves - building community, creating intimate connections, and celebrating the vibrant spectrum of queer experience.

Whether it's the sensual softness of queer intimacy, the liberating freedom of accepting ourselves, or the profound sense of belonging when you find your people - these testimonies capture the richness of LGBTQ+ existence in all its beautiful complexity. We're laughing at the cheeky flirtations, nodding knowingly at the awkward coming-out stories, and feeling a deep kinship.

As we honor Pride, let us hold tight to the wisdom, humor, and empathy flowing through these pages. Let's take joy in the revolutionary act of simply being ourselves, making our invisible world visible.

Happy Pride, our beautiful community. May you continue to laugh, dance, and rise above the hate.



What is a  
non-sexual turn  
on for you?

This might be  
weird, but I  
really like it  
when my wife  
uses a difficult  
vocabulary – a  
word I don't  
know. – Gloria

A good conversation, even  
better if the conversation  
is happening in a bathtub -  
Haben





Eye contact is a huge non-sexual turn on for me. First, I am a way flirty person, so eye contact creates a deep, unspoken connection that can be incredibly powerful and intimate. - Betselot

My wife's Laughter -Red

What's the funniest reaction you've ever gotten when coming out to a friend or family member?

One of my friends said, "You're not gay; you're just a virgin."  
- Melat

"How do you have sex?" Now that I think about it, I should have said "You want me to show you?"  
- Annon

I came out to my sister-in-law as we were having lunch at the Greek Club in Addis Ababa. She smiled wildly and excitedly called the waiter and said, "Bring me another Macchiato, we are celebrating!" - Haben



Who is your  
LGBTQ+ icon,  
and why?



I really don't have any; I  
think I myself am an LGBTQ+  
icon. - Abigail

So proud of us! - Ahnon

Why does  
community matter  
to you as a queer  
person?

Finding someone you can relate to and  
share your experiences with is healing.  
It matters for our mental health. -  
Annon

Because we all need someone to  
support us and tell us that it's okay  
to love who we love.  
- Melat

Because when you are a community  
that is pushed over by everyone, we  
need to stick together and protect  
each other. -S

It says, I am not alone; I have  
someone; in fact, there are many of  
us. - Messi

What's the best pickup line you've ever heard (or used yourself)?

"Do you believe in love at first sight, or should I walk by again?" It's simple, charming, and always brings a smile. - Betselot



Do you have a name  
or should I save your  
contact as MINE?  
- Jamzee

"Are you a camera? Because every time I look at you, I smile," (I have never used it tho, lol) - Melat



You look tired; you wanna sit on my face?  
- Red

"Can I slytherin to bed with you?" (We were talking about Harry Potter.) - S

What is the one quality you appreciate about queer friendships?

Just because we love the same gender doesn't mean we will have the same political consciousness or value, BUT understanding and non-judgmental friends are blessings.

- Annon

It's being there at the lowest times for me.

- Ela



If the friendship is healthy, I can say whatever I feel and not be judged. – Red



What quality do you most appreciate in a romantic or sexual partner?

Their strong arms 😅 The arms that don't get tired easily, and they hand me a cup of water after all the hard work 😊 - Gloria

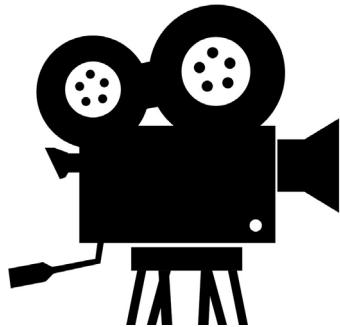


Someone who likes staying home. - Red





What is your  
favorite queer  
film or book?



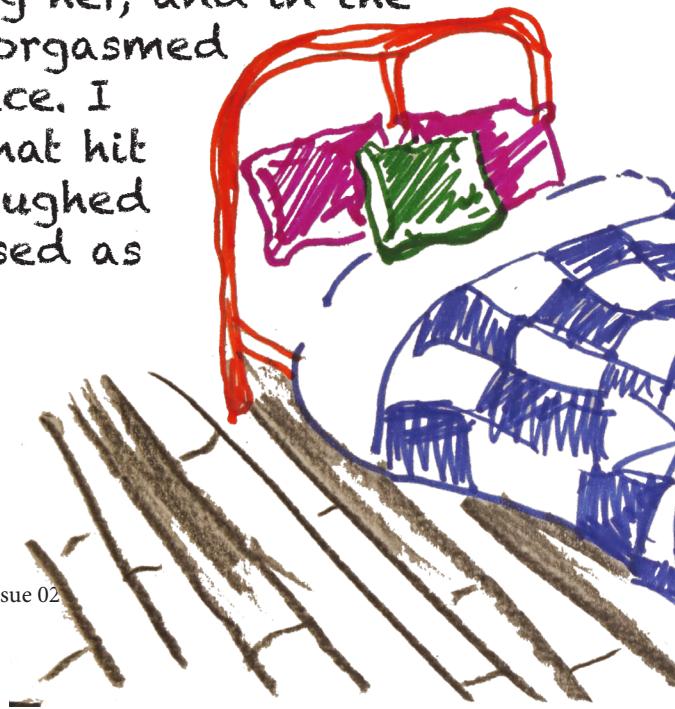
- Rafiki
- Imagine Me & You, Below Her Mouth, Gap
- Elisa and Marcela, The L Word
- My First Summer
- Crush and Pride
- Carol, Station 19, Orange is the New Black
- The Handmaiden
- Disobedience

- Fear of Falling" by Georgia Beers
- Sister Outsider by Audre Lorde
- The Color Purple by Alice Walker
- Camren fanfics (in Wattpad)

What is your most embarrassing sexual moment?

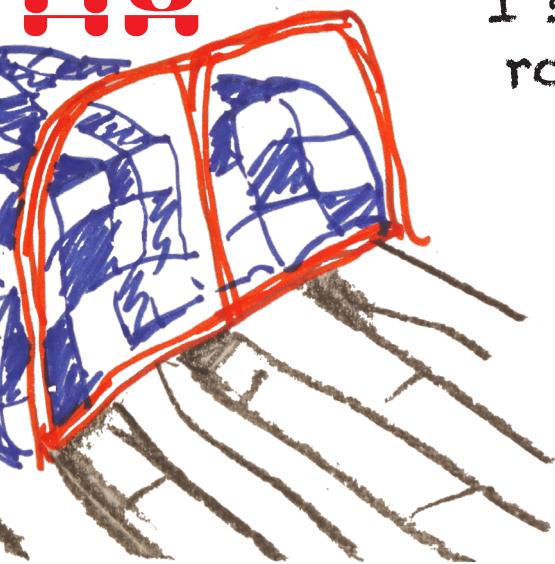
Period stains while fucking. I was young, so I def felt embarrassed. Period sex is hot. - Annon

The first time a woman squirted on me. I was in between her legs, fingering her, and in the throes of fucking when she orgasmed and fluid squirted on my face. I flinched and didnt know what hit me for a few seconds. We laughed about it, but I was embarrassed as hell. - Haben



😂😂 trying the 69 position.  
The moment was awkward.  
She didn't understand what  
I was trying to do and I  
couldn't explain. 😂😂  
- Gloria

I said Ήψή (enough) after one  
round, and she said, "Like a  
straight person?!" Red



What's one thing you  
wish more people  
knew about the queer  
community?

People often don't think that they  
would know a "homosexual." Honey, we  
are next to you. We are the siblings. We  
are the parents. We are everywhere.  
- Annon



That we  
are just  
humans  
too, no  
matter  
who we  
love.  
- Yohan

I wish more people  
understood that being  
queer is not a choice; it's  
just the way we are. We  
don't need other's support,  
just their understanding  
and acceptance. - Betselot

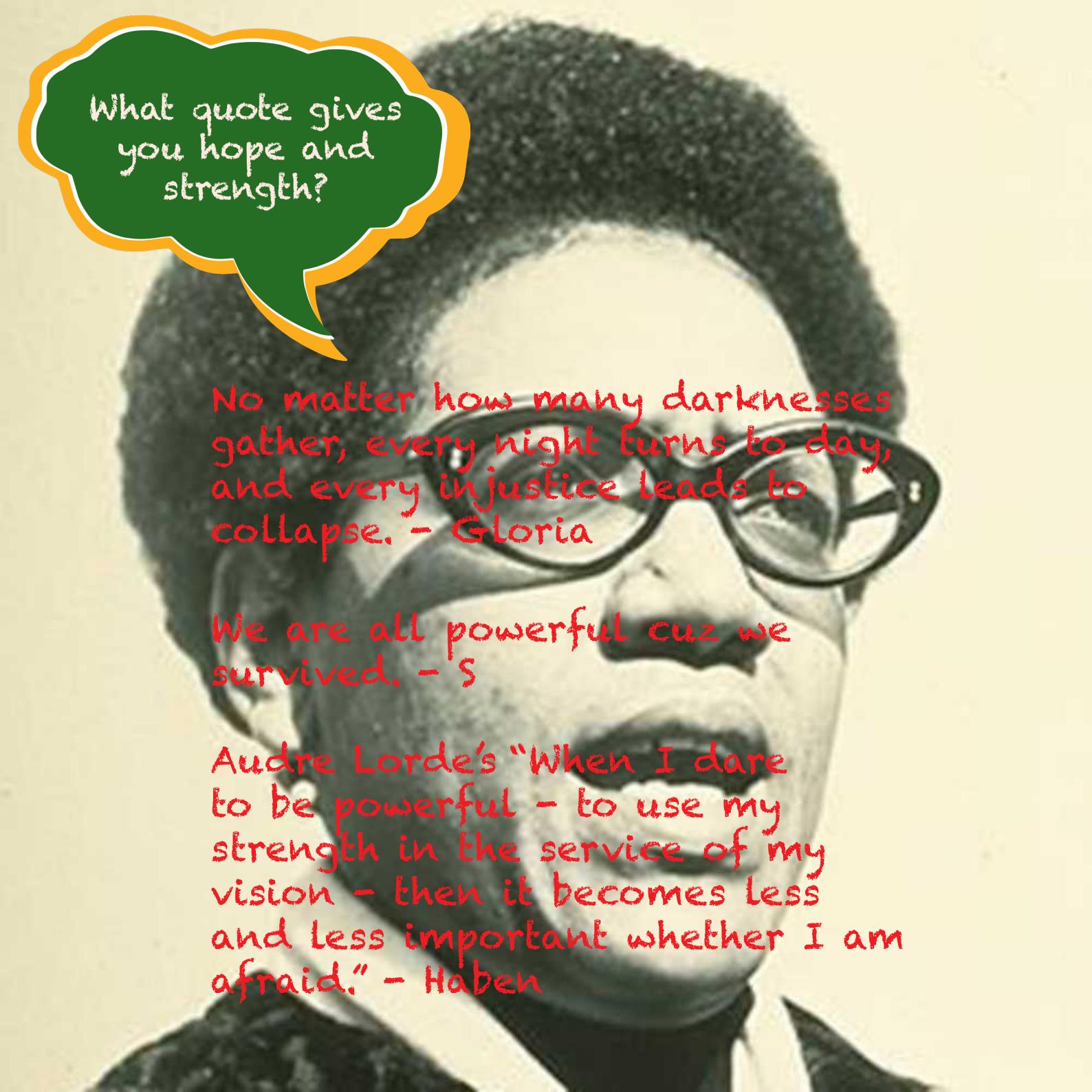
What's the most unexpected way you've celebrated or expressed your queer pride in public?

I came out to my older brother on Ethiopian New Year's Eve last year. It was a spontaneous decision that felt right in the moment, and it turned out to be a liberating start to the new year. - Betselot



I kissed my ex, but no one saw me, of course, but we were in public.  
- Yohan

😂 I wore a bi flag pride mask all through COVID. People just thought it was a cute gradient of pink and blue - S



What quote gives you hope and strength?

No matter how many darknesses gather, every night turns to day, and every injustice leads to collapse. - Gloria

We are all powerful cuz we survived. - S

Audre Lorde's "When I dare to be powerful - to use my strength in the service of my vision - then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid." - Haben