

We, the Foam

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An extract

Original title Wij, het schuim
Publisher Podium, 2018

Translation Dutch into English
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Spoonings
or: please tell your tits
to stop staring at my eyes
(Part I)

“Emme, sweetheart, you’ve got to understand...”

His voice sounded tortured but uncompromising. Oko remained in the middle of the rug. She loosened the sash around her waist, ready to press her heavy breasts against the stiff, cold fabric of his jacket, but he jerked the kimono shut and held her back with outstretched arms.

He couldn’t be serious.

She’d been soaking in a hot bath until ten minutes before the doorbell rang. He loved her body warm, her cheeks red, her curls wet and dripping. Her little living room was all steamy; she was wearing nothing but her kimono and her scent, which she’d taken from between her legs with her finger and rubbed behind her ears. Victorine had gone to the gallery opening. They’d have the whole evening to themselves.

Oko sat down on a chair, his jacket still on, his magic hands buried in his pockets.

“It’s been more than three months—it’s getting serious,” he said with a catch in his throat.

“But I thought you two weren’t having sex anymore!” She didn’t mean to yell.

“Her birthday was at the beginning of June...she’s still my wife, Emme...We had a couple of bottles of wine, it just happened...” His voice faltered.

“Are you sure it’s yours?”

Oko didn’t seem all that bothered by the accusation. They’d spent so much time discussing Victorine’s drunk, illicit behavior that there was no point acting sanctimonious now. He looked sick, more grey than black around the nose and mouth.

“I thought you didn’t want children?”

She knelt down in front of him and gripped his thighs under his coat. He let her do it. He looked away from her giant nipples poking through the much too thin fabric, two jewels under a magician’s cloth.

“Her biological clock...She’s been going on about it for months, Emme. I stood my ground, but she just stopped taking the pill without telling me.”

“What! And you put up with that?”

That Luypaert witch, that fucking spoiled *femme fatale*, that *garçonne* everyone adores with her stone-grey eyes and thin lips—she’d stop at nothing, she got away with everything.

“Emme, sweetheart...That child’s coming. And it’s going to need a responsible father...”

Or he was already putting a ton of responsibility on the fetus’s tiny shoulders, trying to make that baby doll borne out of selfish motherly desperation into a little superhero that would save his marriage and heal

his fractured life so that he wouldn't have to make any decisions himself, so that he wouldn't have to take any leaps of faith...and now it was too late, what a coward...

"But *Okó**, we can keep seeing each other, right?"

Her shoulders were the only part of her body he dared to touch. He had to keep her at arm's length.

"Queen Bee... you know I love you more than her, that hasn't changed. But I have to be there for that child." He looked at her like a black sheep.

"But we still have six months, don't we?"

She despised herself for it, but she didn't want to lose Oko. His *kofè*, gleaming like a wild chestnut. His eyes like cultivated chestnuts. His big mouth, his thick lips. The only person who kissed as greedily as she did, the only person she didn't have to hold back with. The way he indulged in her voluptuousness... never, nowhere had she felt so comfortable with her own heaviness, not even when she's alone. The things he could do with that divine mouth of his, those hands... But it wasn't just the sex, it had become so much more.

She thought she'd be his for the rest of her life and that he would be hers; it was just a LAT relationship, but one that had to be kept secret. She couldn't go on without him; he was her other half. The news hit her in the gut.

"I need to go to the bathroom. Don't leave!"

When she sat down on the toilet and it all spurted out, that's when the shrieking crying began. He could hear her out in the living room and stood up. This was unbearable. How the hell could he go on like this? It had already been hard enough to keep his eyes and hands off her in public for all those years. When they went out with friends, she'd wear dresses with plunging necklines, and all he wanted to do was bury his nose in that coveted crevice, to breathe in the familiar smell of her fresh sweat and eau de toilette, to cup his two hands around one of her Earth goddess breasts. He became delirious whenever she reached past him at tables full of friends, when her *omú* rested on his arm ever so briefly, and he couldn't grab them. Even there, with a hint of mockery in her voice, she'd pronounce his name *Okó*, as if the stress on the last syllable were an innocent mistake, as if she—the only person who found his mother tongue beautiful and exciting and could remember the words he'd taught her!—didn't know that she was really addressing his erection. She'd drive him crazy whenever they were with people who posed a risk, everything they had was at stake—still, he had never told her, never even asked her to stop.

She came back from the toilet completely naked.

Her face was blotchy with tears, her eyes were desperate bullets, but still, she was completely his queen. *Ayaba ayaba*, so worthy.

That body, always as soft as sweetbread dough...the way it swelled, the way he could disappear into it, knead it...her belly was big enough to be a whole world, her giant, heavy breasts the sky above it, *orun orun mi orun*...Victorine was as bland as a dried stockfish.

"Queen Bee..." he groaned.

"One last time..." she begged. "You owe me that. I need to feel you inside me one last time, *Okó...kofè...nla... gan... lile... ijalu... Okó*, please?"

He couldn't take it anymore. He pressed his hands over his eyes. He imagined her sitting on top of him, pressing so deeply against him that his hair hurts because he's so big and hard, her breasts like beautiful, swollen udders hanging down over his face, the silvery pink streaks running down to her giant teats, how he sucked on them like a starving man. Or him on top, blissfully rocking back and forth, still inside her, slowly shaking his ass, her moaning, everything on her body heaving, undulating. Then he'd pull out, despite her playful resistance, and lay his shiny, black cock on her pale, white belly.

She tried to wriggle her way into his coat, under his arms.

"Please, Peaches..." he groaned from behind his hands, "I can't take it..."

He'd rather she stay furious at him, rip into him, beat him. How could he stand firm now? Don't look at her, look at the kitchen door, man! Think about that baby: the baby lying on a blanket in the grass, the two of you in the kitchen looking out the window, your dick between her heavy breasts, her sweet, sweet *omú*, her licks, *la*, down your shaft, the way she spreads your cum all over her phenomenal breasts. Shame on you! Stand firm!

"You don't have to take it," she cried. "Come on, *Okó*, look at me, come with me to bed, one last time..."

"I can't do this, sweetheart, it's too much..."

He shoved her away brusquely and rushed out of the room, slamming the front door behind him.

She sinks down on the rug, the rug that had so often chafed their knees. She crosses her arms over her breasts and buries her hands in her armpits, she doesn't know how to stop the tearing behind her ribs. She wails. The cramping in her bowels returns. She rushes to the loo. She stays on the toilet until she starts shivering, she doesn't know what she's been thinking all this time.

What she doesn't think about is a beautiful little mulatto, Tom if it's a boy, Susan if it's a girl, and the loving gaze of her *Ololufe* when he sees the little tyke.

"I'll murder her. She's destroyed my precious, infinite present. I'll destroy her."

Emmerence pulls on the grey sweater she stole from Oko the first time they were together that she now likes to sleep in and stands in front of the mirror. Tearless. Expressionless.

Oko Danticat—she had a life before him...a love life even. Her first lover when she moved here was his best friend...She should've known better than to fall for a married man...but it was all wild butterflies back then. Before long she'd broken it off with Des Esseintes to be with the black god...And even though she spent more time missing him than being with him...missing usually brings sadness but longing always brings happiness...and she didn't mind living alone, she was an animal going about its business.

And now she's thirty-one, and all of a sudden she doesn't know what to live for anymore.

What's life without his thundering laugh—a laugh that's way too loud and comes straight from the lungs, not one that gets stuck in the throat like those of white men. What's life when you're no longer Queen Bee or Peaches. When no one calls you *mi oyinbo akara. Mi ayaba*. A life where you no longer parade your naked ass around the house to provoke a slap and the hot-blooded '*ketekete*'. A life without Yoruba, their secret language of sweet-nothings and filth. A life with no one to groan *mi lile dudu ati obo ninu re tutu abo* in her ear until she comes. No one she can beg *po mi ori omu... la mi obo... muyan mi ido...*

"I'll murder her," she gnashes her teeth in the mirror and storms up the stairs. She pulls on a pair of black leggings and picks out a blood-red wrap dress with three-quarter-length sleeves and a plunging neckline. In the mirror, she sprays herself lavishly with eau de toilette, layers her eyes with make-up, Amy Winehouse style, and smears her lips with a shade of lipstick called Possessed Plum, which seems fitting to her. No jewelry, hair loose, no time to waste. She quickly fishes a potato knife out of the cutlery drawer.

*Translation of words in Yoruba, in order of appearance:

okó erection

kofè penis

omú breasts

ayaba queen

mi orun my heaven

nla big

gan stiff

lile hard

ijalu to bump

la to lick

ololufe beloved, lover
mi oyinbo akara my sweetbread
mi ayaba my queen
ketekete ass
mi lile dudu ati obo ninu re tutu obo my hard dick in your wet cunt
po mi ori omu pinch my nipples
la mi obo lick my cunt
muyan mi ido suck my clitoris
