

# Slut

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## I.

GRANDMOTHER SAID THERE is a slut trapped in every woman, a wild taboo that must never be set free.

So mother dipped her fingers in a tub of pomade and massaged her daughter's clitoris until the puny thing grew thinner and disappeared into the fold of skin.

## II.

Ugwu nwanyi bu di ya. Imekwa enu, mee ani, ugwu nwanyi bu di ya.

She packed up her books, took his name and became dignified.

## III.

In the next life, she will come as a man. For now, she should make the

best of this body. So she made her husband a pot of soup and prepared a table for him to eat. She laid back and watched him eat.

And though his face was riddled with pleasure, she did not know the taste of her own food.

IV.

I stood under a shower, my breasts drooping closer to my stomach, and I thought: you sad paw-paws! It's too early to fall asleep.

V.

A masseuse lived down the street. Her fingers sleek and long, body thin and shapely.

One day, I stretched on the bed and let her hands work my nerves, easing my knotted tension.

My slut stirred, and I bit my tongue until I tasted my own blood.

VI.

Tell me how to make you happy, he said. Here, take my hands, speak with them.

I don't know what happy is, I said. What does it taste like?

Like guavas after the rains washed the trees of harmattan dust. Like onugbu soup after mama added ogiri?

VII.

Sex: a ceremony for my husband's orgasm. My hands: tools to stir his eagerness. My body: his to devour.

He would hover above me, face taut, sweaty. How pleasing it is for this giant to quiver above me like an okra branch in the wind. And when he collapsed on my chest, I would hold him. I had fulfilled my purpose. What else was the purpose of a woman?

Until Nneka. Wild one, body tapered like a Coke bottle, limbs stretched from heaven to earth. Nneka, a mouth spitting stories like hot corns, a head filled with sin. She gazed at my cage, shook her head at my slut and said, “Chai, who did this to you?”

She picked at my locks, tantric communion, and I have never been the same again.

### VIII.

Grandmother looked at daughter and said, “This one is spoiled.”

Mother shook her head and said, “Her chi succumbed to slumber and this happened.” Daughter strutted away. A proud slut.

### IX.

My husband used to joke about how docile I was before I joined the choir. One day, he paused between thrusts to trap my moans with the flat of his palm.

“Who are you?” he asked. “I have never seen you like this before.”

I bit his hand, threw my head back, forced him down, and he disappeared between my thighs.

He has yet to emerge ever since.