

The Muse Speaks of her Disrespect

Jacqueline Bishop

I is a girl who always give my man
whole heap of attention.
I is a girl who make sure
my man well taken care of:
Him week's clothes pressed
and ready for him
every Sunday evening.
Me always patching
and darning and sewing.
I listen to all my man's dreams,
all him nightly stirrings.
And if is good times my man want,
tell the truth dear reader,
you know of another girl
who can dance and move her waist,
make up deejay song,
and sing her heart out like me?
Isn't that why that boy did like me,
alone on the sea side,
rocking to the music,
singing to myself,
in the first place?
I don't know why
I even let that boy sweet-talk me.
Why me turn the black
of mi yeye pon the boy from the islands,
short and dark, with hair like mine
in thick heavy ropes
tumbling down him back.
Why would I even bother-bother
with idiot Odysseus for
when you got a man like that to look after?
I want you to see him in him hey day,
the man I fall for, before him diss me.

I want you to see him, this man,
carrying home a string of pretty-colored
parrot fish I give him from the ocean ---
how him steam the fish down
nice-nice with escellion and tomato,
and we eat it with boiled yellow yam,
dumplings and okro.

This was before the boy get bright and feisty,
move other woman into we house we sharing,
call-calling this other woman wife,
and yes, dear reader, before you knew it,
there was a whole bag of jing bang pickney.

So I do him like I do all the others:

I call back my songs into myself,
leave him without a word. Yes,
reader, mi did leave him speechless.

I leave him, in fact, walking around
and around in circles,
pencil in hand, trying to find
something to say to me, searching
for the best way to come back home to me.