

The difficult relationship
between a father with a
migrant background and his
daughter

Bintje

TULY SALUMU

In this autofictional debut we follow Bintu – Bintje to her Flemish grandfather – a woman who carries both Belgium and Congo within her. She grows up in the 1990s; racism is everywhere. Bintje's father was the son of a minister in his native Congo, but in his new homeland he can work only as an odd-job man at his daughter's school. Frustrated, he loses himself in God, takes to the bottle and becomes increasingly aggressive at home. The family falls apart. Bintje adores her father and keeps giving him fresh chances, but she doesn't succeed in becoming part of his life.

The demons of her father's roots, the scars of her childhood, and ever-present racism shape and dominate her adult life too. When Bintje becomes a mother herself and realizes that her son Finn, with his white appearance, doesn't resemble her or her father in any way, she snaps. Eventually she severs all contact with Finn and his father. Her job as a teacher provides her with something to hold onto, until she loses control at school and is forced to confront her childhood traumas.

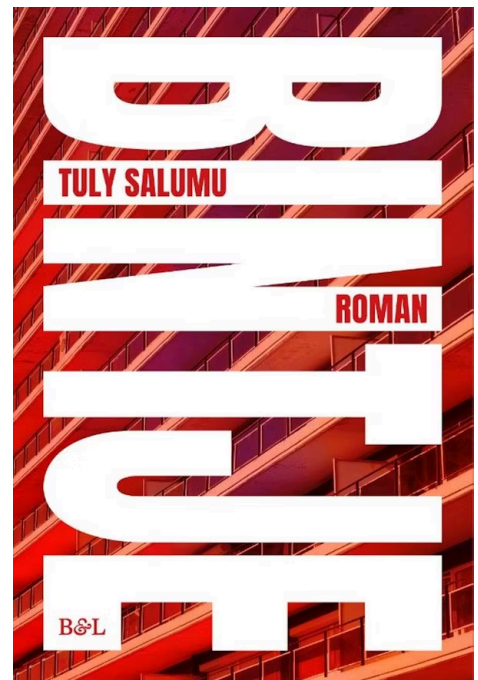
A gripping and hard-as-nails story

FEELING

'Bintje' is a raw novel with a central character who struggles with the process of forming an identity and with the influence of the socio-political situation on a family. In meticulous prose, Salumu shows what it's like to grow up as a girl and woman of colour in a white environment. She raises fascinating philosophical questions about identity, generational trauma, admiration and parenthood, and succeeds in deeply affecting the reader with this passionate debut.

A most brilliant novel about a woman who feels her childhood weighing too heavily

HUMO



AUTHOR



Tuly Salumu (b. 1988) is a journalist who writes, among other things, about identity and colour in 'rainbow families', about diversity, motherhood and the importance of inclusive representation in the media. Her work is often autobiographical in tone.

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