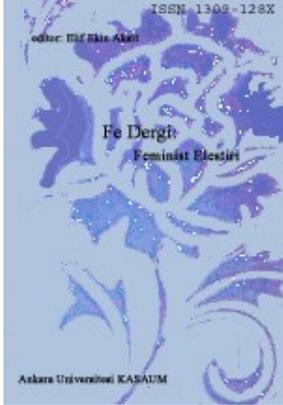


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Marriage in the Doorway of Shame
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Marriage in the Doorway of Shame*Maria Formola*

Music has a catchy beat. Men are straight and firm, the young women pretty and the mature women fierce. Many shots of stone walls and doors and conversations in doorways. There is a rite of passage in progress that involves the whole village that contrasts in rhythm to the private events.

The men are allowed to fight and the women placate and work beneath the public eye tho the older one is fierce.

When the groom is called out he appears as an innocent youth who is untroubled by anything. The older men are bringing him into the male fraternity.

There is an argument between mother and father and brother and sister of the bride and a deep shameful indiscretion is revealed that could result in tragedy.

The Bride is innocent and ignorant and she is the prettiest. We see her quiet and demure, full of sweet innocence before her shame is named.

An old woman whispers “the secret shame” and the older sister hears. She is worried and the “secret shame” is also her shame and pain. She has been betrayed and her mother gives her comfort and gives her perspective to accept the “shame-pain” and pretend all is well. The daughter tries.

The men and neighbors are happy and all is well with the public face as people dance a wedding dance in the street. In the doorways of the village the secret is spread and discussed.

The child is as innocent as the bride and is feed. The old women take power like a man in managing the inner communications and keeping all the emotional turmoil inside. The happy party in the street is a contrast the groom is a baby groom and the old men are loud and ribald.

The older brother tries to contain the shameful secret and puts on a good face for the public. He is able to contain his emotions even in the doorways and private rooms.

The bridegroom boy is happy and has no shame.

The red ribbon is tied onto the bride dress of white and the bride cries. The red seems to be a symbol of the blood of the marriage bed and somehow triggers the shame that she cannot contain even in public view.

Everybody pretends all is well even if it is not.

The baby bridegroom is forever happy and walks willingly to the rite of passage. The bride is a covered mystery without her own legs taken to a ceremony of birth/death and lifetime of...

But the village is happy and dancing as the ceremony goes forward. The secret shame is hidden in the public face. One imagines the whispers in the doorways and the private rooms.

Part 2 of the Drama the Doorway of Shame

The red sash is tied and the whispers are quiet as the village dances. The stone walls of the village have absorbed centuries of the secrets, the shames, the illicit liaisons, the joys, the tears and the laughter; Deaths and Entrances. The rocks that form the walls were put up by generations of men, good men, mean men, jolly men, hard working men and their sons. The rocks and stones are the record keepers of the earth. We see them like small movie screens with multiple scenes playing all at once in silence. They remember all; the energy of the restless world of plants and animals, birds, and the two legged ones; even the swimming beings of the ancient Cambrian seas. The energy of seasons and generations impregnates their silent images. Few of the two leggeds have the patience to listen unless millenniums and mountains have pressed out diamonds, emeralds and other luminous stones that men call precious.

Lilith the fierce older woman is angry. She is usually angry. She lives with that anger tightly coiled inside like a little viper ready to strike where ever she can. The attacks do not kill the outer forms but they make small slashes in all around her. As she leans against the wall of her marriage home she watches the dance and the bride whose tears have dried.

Her power of inner wisdom and intuition is beyond most of the people around her yet she must pretend that she is docile on the outside while her creative energies are poisoned by lethargy.

This wedding day, warmed by promise of new life and the subdued sun, odd feeling bubbles up through the soles of Lilith's shoes. It feels to her that her feet were rooting deep into the energy of dark earth. This darkness did not feel like the dark of ignorance. To Lilith it felt like she touched the other half of wisdom and the twisting of her mind went straight into a flash of light.

She hears the memories whispered in silence from the stones. The stones open up visions of Lilith's past. The rock of the wall she leans on remembers her as a young girl/woman beaten and forced into a marriage that benefited the family honor. Her life has been the service of an unwilling martyr. So far she has done well in punishing all around her with darkness. Drops of her blood have touched this stone.

Quickly she walks away and through the door way to the inner room of her home. Light streams through dirty windows. Lilith takes a cloth and wipes the middle window. As she works the whole village plays before her eyes of the moment and her eyes of memory. The bare branched trees, stone walls, all the people old and young are dancing in the light.

For the first time in twenty six years Lilith smiles from the inside. She sees the young bride and groom and the red sash. The hidden darkness of her own shaming comes into her mind. Everything around her looks the same. The walls are there, shadows in the doorways, whispers and laughter.

Lilith puts the cloth down and slowly walks outside into the weak sun. As she passes through the dark door way a stream of sunlight slants inside. Lilith smiles at the young bride.

