

FEMININE PAIN

(Poem by Dahabo Ali Muse, Somalia)

*And if I may speak of my wedding night:
I had expected caresses, sweet kisses
hugging and love.
No, never!*

*Awaiting me was pain, suffering and sadness.
I lay in my wedding bed, groaning like a wounded
animal, a victim of feminine pain.
At dawn, ridicule awaited me.
My mother announced: Yes, she is a virgin!*

*When fear gets hold of me,
when anger seizes my body,
when hate becomes my companion,
then I get feminine advice, because it is only feminine pain,
and I am told feminine pain perishes like all feminine things.*

*The journey continues, or the struggle continues,
as modern historians say.
As the good tie of marriage matures,
as I submit and sorrow subsides,
my belly becomes like a balloon.
A glimpse of happiness shows,
a hope, a new baby, a new life!*

*But a new life endangers my life,
a baby's birth is death and destruction for me!*

*It is what my grandmother called the three feminine sorrows,
She said the day of circumcision, the wedding night,
and the birth of a baby are the triple feminine sorrows.*

*As the birth bursts, I cry for help, when the battered flesh tears.
No mercy, push! they say,
It is only feminine pain!*

*And now I appeal:
I appeal for love lost, for dreams broken,
for the right to live as a whole human being.
I appeal to all peace loving people to protect, to support
and give a hand to innocent little girls who do no harm,
obedient to their parents and elders, all they know is only smiles.
Initiate them to the world of love,
not to the world of feminine sorrow!!*