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The Crown of Loss

By Zahra Taheri¹

Abstract

In many patriarchal, Eastern cultures, marriage has been idealized and beautified as a means of escape for girls and young women. Marriage has been propagated as a way out of the restricted life girls often experience under the harsh surveillance of male family members, especially fathers and brothers. Hence, many Eastern cultures, particularly the more patriarchal and restricted ones, often witness the formation of the “Cinderella Complex”² in girls. Many girls come to believe that marriage can help them realize their suppressed dreams. As a result, girls often focus on attracting male attention instead of focusing on cultivating their talents. Yet they often become disappointed after marriage, finding themselves in a close replica of the past lives they were trying to escape, but with even more duties, higher expectations, and even less leisure time. Patriarchal societies have silenced this truth for years to benefit men with younger brides of less experience who tend to be more naive and malleable and, thus, more compliant. This silence surrounding the realities of marrying young has proved devastating for Eastern girls, leading to life-long regrets. Having wasted their time and talents only to get married, many girls are left broken and hopeless, without their own talents and means to survive on their own, and in a marriage that mirrors the circumstances they were trying to escape in the first place.

Keywords: Cinderella complex, Marital life, Patriarchy, Women

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² Colette Dowling defines it as “unconscious desire to be taken care of by others” in a book of the same title in 1981.

She is an heir to Cain,
History has boxed and labeled her:
Jealous, vengeful, and foxy;
No wonder, then, what becomes of her:
An 'other' doesn't expect a voice.

Cornered to kitchens of darkness,
Or beauty salons of powders, blush, and shadow
She pays days and nights for her beauty and kindness
With the heaviest price of identity-less-ness.

Hers is the most losing of crowns,
To which she's been heir following the rite,
And deluded believes in fancy marriage time
That unbeknownst to her has shattered her Mom.