

Spirit of Bosnia / Duh Bosne

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Bosnian Folk Poetry — Wedding Songs

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1. When a girl leaves her home to get married

Our sister, our dear friend,
You are going, and leaving us behind.
Are you sad, may your mother rejoice,
Are you sad that we are parting?
— I'm sad, my dear sisters!
I miss the trees and rocks,
Much less going to the village of another.
My sisters, remain with God!
— In a good hour, our dear sister!
Every girl gives to her beloved,
She gives to her beloved a bouquet of flowers:
and carry to your intended
A small bouquet of fragrant flowers:
Lovage so you'll love and caress each other,
Carnations so you won't quarrel,
Violets so he'll kiss you often,
So he'll kiss you whenever he awakes.

From Bosnia

Lirske narodne pjesme:

Antologija

Dr. Tvrtko ?ubeli?

4 izd.

Zagreb, Vjesnik: 1963, s. 83

2. To the groom

In Bosnia, Mile is shoeing his horse:
He is not shoeing him with regular horsehoes,
Rather he's shoeing him with silver and lead.
He's shoeing him, the horse kicks.

Mile speaks softly to his horse:

– Stop, horse, stop, my good steed!
 If, horse, we succeed in fetching the bride,
 Things will be good both for me and for you!
 Your manger will be decorated with woven maple branches,
 You will be adorned with everlasting flowers and basil,
 You'll eat for a day, and frolick for two.
 – If, horse, we don't succeed in fetching her,
 Things will be bad both for me and for you!
 Your mane will be braided with bitter hellebore,
 You'll eat for a day, and be sick for two.

From Bosnia

Lirske narodne pjesme, Antologija, prired.
 Tvrtko ?ubeli?, Zagreb, Moj biblioteka, 1956, s. 64

3. When the bride gives gifts to the wedding party

A beautiful girl prays to God:
 «O God, grant me that the sun rises,
 So I can hand out my gifts,
 So I can give gifts to the wedding guests:
 To the chief witness, a horse and falcon,
 To my father-in-law, silk and velvet,
 To my dear brother-in-law, silver buttons,¹
 To my mother-in-law, a handkerchief with gold embroidery,²
 To my sister-in-law, a handkerchief with silver embroidery,³
 To my darling, a gold apple,
 So I can fall into his white arms,
 So I can kiss him whenever I awake.»

s. 19, #5

Narodna književnost, Bosanskohercegovačka književna hrestomatija, Knj. II.
 Dr. Hatidža Krnjevi?, ?enana Buturovi?, Dr. Ljubomir Zukovi?,
 Sarajevo: Zavod za izdavanje udžbenika, 1972, s. 19 #5

Translated with notes by Masha Belyavski-Frank, DePauw University, Greencastle, IN

Notes

1. *Toke* are large, spherical buttons on a man's vest, often made of silver filigree or of metal with decorative piercings. ?
2. A *boš'aluk* is a piece of fine white cloth with four panels, embroidered with either gold or silver embroidery. ?
3. A *jagluk* is a piece of fine white cloth with two horizontal panels, embroidered with either gold or silver embroidery. ?

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