

Am I a Woman Yet?

'Come now,' whispers Mama
Womanhood lures me
A disfiguring ritual of my ancestors looms
And what happens after?

I have been promised marriage soon
Economic relief will strengthen my father's spirit
Done hair, colorful dresses, fertility
I chase a marriage soon to disappoint

The Virus amplifies empty pockets
Desperation grabs my innocence
Will a full uterus secure my future, Mama?

Labor obstruction lasts from dusk to dawn
Tears and scars interrupt plans
A malodorous stream washes my husband away

I should bring children into the world
A sign of wealth, of vitality
But now I cannot.

No child, no control, no worth
I pray for relief

I am already dead to them anyway.