Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood

Fatima Mernissi

Description

Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood takes place in Fez, Morocco, in the 1940s and early 1950s. The harem of this memoir’s title is a large house with its own courtyard, shared by several generations of an extended family. Fatima Mernissi recounts her experiences and observations as a precocious young girl living in the harem, acutely aware of the many sacred frontiers she is forbidden to cross—the barriers between men and women and between Muslims and Christians, the threshold separating one room from another or the interior of the house from the street outside. She learns that all the women around her chafe at the limitations of harem life in one way or another, but she also comes to realize that she can transcend these limitations covertly—through imagination, creativity, learning, and even mischief.

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just the boy child. This is typical of Fatima's mother and she teaches Fatima that she must stand up for herself if she wants things in life.