



Composing Venus

Written By Elaine Acworth

Siobhan

My father had a quiet grave. He was a gentle man. Mum was always the leader, the wheeler in the marriage. Some of the other children said he was hen-pecked. I was ashamed of her. I never thought about what drew them together. You don't when you're a kid.

One night there was a knock on the door. My father'd took a fall. Mum drove four hours out to him. The men didn't want to try and move him on horseback, see. She tried to send me to stay with one of the other women but I wouldn't go. I screamed and screamed. So I went in the back of the dray. It was a bright moon that night. And windless. The spear grass was rimmed in silver. When we got there my father was lying on the ground with a blanket over him and a bandage on his head. My Mother took the blanket off and ran her hands down his body very softly. Then she took the bandage off. There was a funny dent in the side of his skull, near the back. The size of a two bob piece. She had blood on her fingers when she took her hands away. She moved him twice. Edged his body round to face a bit more westward. I didn't understand what was happening. She told me to move him would surely kill him. So I said why was she moving him then? And she answered that my father wanted to watch the Cross. He wanted to see the Cross roll over. So she moved him whenever he lost sight of it and lay back down and held his hand. She said he was a man to dream all his life so he should dream to death as well.