Title: Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again

Author: Ola Rotimi

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This is the first time I have read a play written by an African and the second play book I have read since Shakespeare's Macbeth. And save one or two issues, I enjoyed it. Extremely. The issues has to do with reading the instructions given in the play, such as telling the director of the play that a particular statement was made off-stage or something else.

Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again is a hilarious comic play by Ola Rotimi. It tells the story of Lejoka-Brown, a soldier and a man of many wives. One of the wives he married himself while fighting in the Congo, the other (Mama Rashida) was the wife of his elder brother who was married to him by default after the death of his brother. The third wife, Sikira, was married to help Lejoka-Brown, who was contesting for a political position, obtain the votes of the market women since her mother was the president of the National Union of Nigerian Market Women and standing for a political position wanted the post.

The comedy starts when Lizzy, the one only wife who thought she alone owns Lejoka-Brown, decides to come home to her husband after completing her medical studies in the United States. Lejoka-Brown didn't want her in his fathers' house and so decided to pick her up from the airport. However, the plane landed earlier than scheduled. And Lizzy, having known of Lejoka-Brown's fathers' name, proceeded to find it and make herself at home.

What follows is a series of comic incidences that need to be read and appreciated. For instance, Lizzy, having stayed in America, came to the traditional marriage with 'White' culture in terms of dressing and her relationship with her husband. She was bold to say whatever she wanted, whereas the others were not. She played with her husband whilst the others could not. It was one of these love-plays, chasing one another, that the third
wife (Sikira) ran away to her mother's house shouting 'Our husband has gone mad again' - she left the marriage for good.

People have read this as a political statement. I only read it as the period of transformation that hit most African families from the traditional to what we have today. It also marked the changing roles of women in the household. Thus, even though Lejoka-Brown was a traditional man, he loved the 'eccentricities' Lizzy brought into the household and into the marriage relationship. However, being a man as he was, once in a while he wanted to show his authority.

Another point is that, Lejoka-Brown's political ambition was to help him match up to his educated wife, since he was less educated. He was later to abandon it when Lizzy told him that that wasn't what she loved about him. She expects to see him as she knew him way back in the Congo.

Let me spoil it by saying that in the end, Lizzy got her husband all to herself. How she did it is for the reader to find out.

I recommend this book to anyone who love to read. It is that good. Very good. Read about him here.

ImageNations Rating: 6.0 out of 6.0

Posted by Nana Fredua-Agyeman at 8:41 am