

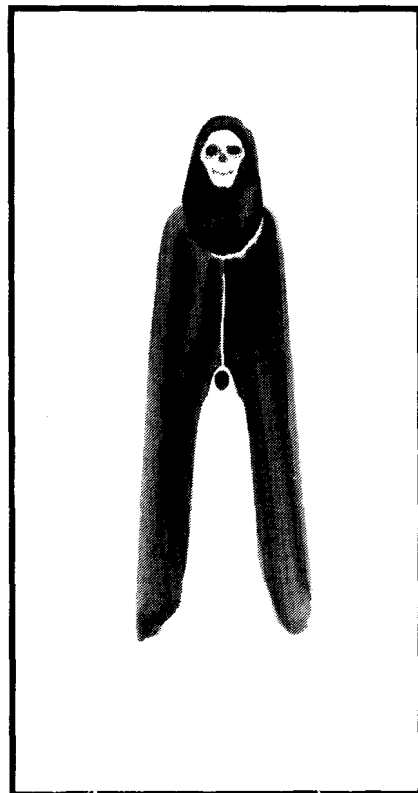
LYN LIFSHIN

Rapes in Bosnia

Before the local Serb warlord took Merisha away from her apartment to rape her on June 9, he told her not to cry. Merisha, a Muslim school girl would be safe with him he promised. Then he ordered her, a 15 year old sister and an 18 year old friend into car and drove them to a motel in their home town of Visegrad where the girls were locked in separate rooms. Merisha heard her sister, a few hours later, sobbing. She never saw her again. The war lord, well known locally for years, came into Merisha's room, put a table in front of the door and told her to undress. "He said if i didn't do what he wanted, I would never go home," Merisha recalled, speaking in a nervous but steady voice. "Then he ordered me to take off all my clothes. I didn't want to do that. He said I must, that it would be better to take off my clothes myself or else he would do it and he would be violent." Merisha paused, tightened her hold on the hand of her older sister, stared

at a spot on the table cloth and resumed speaking, "I started to cry. He said I was lucky to be with him. He said I could have been thrown in the river with rocks tied around my ankles. But I didn't want to do it. He got angry and cursed, said I'm going to bring in ten soldiers." And so Merisha who said she never had a boyfriend tried to stop crying as she was raped

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