

Upon leaving His Poetess

Mursalata Muhammad

Tis benign he thinks, to shed the shadow of his poetess
to discard her or put her off
packing her away with his other things in a trunk
still he folds his belongings, placing them neatly in
whilst his mind surrenders, unable to compete against
her 26 other lovers
whose combinations become
infinite in her hands

The umpteenth time tis this he packs
watching her long neck bent deep into pages
oblivious to him? Oblivious to his actions?
Oblivious? is she and her lovers??
He envies every stroke of lead
on the naked white surface, she fills with her soul
He cringes with every contact of her fingertips to the keypad
impressing her out of his reach, into Cyber's space
He packs unable to fight her need to write

Yet, now what is this?
He packs pants mended by some mysterious hand
His mind cannot picture her cuddling a needle's tread
He thinks, "What lapse of madness would loose her
from her lovers' grip long enough to tend me?"

"Has my umpteenth packing spree been all a twisted trick on me?"
"I've packed all this, methinks, in vain!?" as he holds trousers as lover's proof
waiting to hear words that spoof
his packing. . .

She lifts her head from the writing desk and
wonders out loud words that he might hear

*Who shall thou find with the familiarity
of your inner thighs etched in her mind?
Who couldst thou get to fit
the geography of your body on the tips of her lips?
Wouldst he find another who could
rhyme the rise of his behind till
it sloped down the other side?*

She dips her pen in black ink as her head bends down
back into worlds flowing from her mind

He puts the mended trousers on
his trunk -- in the closet.

