



# Muse and Drudge

*Harryette Mullen*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

# Muse and Drudge

*Harryette Mullen*

**Muse and Drudge** Harryette Mullen  
poetry, "engaged & engaging" (Henry Louis Gates)

## Muse and Drudge Details


Date : Published November 1st 1995 by Singing Horse Press

ISBN : 9780935162158

Author : Harryette Mullen

Format : Paperback 88 pages

Genre : Poetry

 [Download Muse and Drudge ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online Muse and Drudge ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online Muse and Drudge Harryette Mullen**

---

## From Reader Review Muse and Drudge for online ebook

### Angie says

Major Field Prep: 109/133

Mullen's book of poetry is a celebration of sound and rhythm. She intricately plays with onomatopoeia, alliteration, homophones, and puns to create a landscape of unexpected sonic combinations that require a reader's close attention. It is a single long poem split into quatrains, all using enjambment, with little formal punctuation. It is rich in literary, historical, mythical, biblical, musical, and political allusions. It is about denouncing the restriction of black women to either "muse" or "drudge" (and the many plays on those words, such as "mules" and "drugs"). It is inadequate to be regaled into the passive inspiration of another's artistic work as well as into the active but mindless labor that allows someone the luxury of creation. *Muse and Drudge* begins with the belief of a black women's autonomous voice and ability to create, with how "Sapphire's lyre styles." It ends with a direct address call to the reader to "proceed with abandon/ finding yourself where you are." It is the making and sustaining of an unencumbered and autonomous black female voice.

---

### Sara says

This poem MOVES! Luscious language. Try this on:

arrives early for the date  
to tell him she's late  
he watches her bio clock balk on seepy time  
petals out of rhythm docked for trick crimes

flunked the pregnancy test  
mistimes space probe, she aborted  
legally blind justice, she miscarried  
scorched and salted earth, she's barren

when Aunt Haggie's chirren throws  
an all originals ball  
the souls ain't got a stray word  
for the woman who's wayward

dead to the world  
let earth receive her piece  
let every dark room repair her heart  
let nature and heaven give her release

---

### and says

exercise for yr jaw

"it's rank it cranks you up  
crash you're fracked you suck  
shucks your wack you be  
all you cracked up to be"

---

### **Paul says**

This is a book-length poem with four quatrains to the page. Its subject is essentially black experience in the U.S., with a strong suggestion of the Blues and black cultural references threaded in code throughout, often homophonically. For example, the word "Muse" in the title suggests "Mules"; the expression "stark strangled banjos" sounds like "The Star-Spangled Banner." Here's how it appears in its stanza: "devils dancing on a dime / cut a rug in ragtime / jitterbug squat diddly bow / stark strangled banjo." Diddly bow is Bo Diddly (Ellis McDaniels), the musician, and also the diddly-bo, a single-string instrument of African influence. Because HM is said to read pages in random order from the book, there's the distant possibility that its form relates to the African practice of Ifa divination, in which a priest, or babalawo, presents a specific poem from the Ifa canon of 256 (16 x 16) depending on the way in which 16 cowrie shells are cast on a prophecy tray by the supplicant.

---

### **Emily says**

This I read for my first independent study. This book is amazing to me. I'm overcome with the desire to read it again thinking about it right now.

---

### **Qinglan says**

Great first book of sounds

---

### **Melissa says**

This deserves re-reading. I'm intrigued by the form (one long poem in short, mostly three beat, four line stanzas), the music, and the concerns.

---

### **Will says**

I think Ginsberg gets the credit for coining the term "bop-prosody" in the introductory blurb of Kerouac's *Mexico City Blues*; however, it still stands as a very good vessel for categorizing more [post]modern poets like Harryette Mullen (if categorize we must). So it is no surprise that in *Muse & Drudge* we immediately are aware just how playful Mullen's language can be--how teeming with life her quatrains become when spoken outright and out loud. Not only does she sometimes allow for sound to dictate meaning, but she also allows

imagery to give way to ideological themes. How does this help? Well, prick up my ears and my eyes, and you prick up my mind.

---