

Cloak

by Margaret Okere

Each day I cloak my emotions
as if I don the *chador*,
hood covering my forehead,
my face veiled. Only my eyes
exposed. Hands submerged in dark
folds falling to the floor.
Within the crowd, I move
silent.

Forbidden to speak the words
burning my tongue. Forbidden
to touch even your hand.
Impossible to meet you alone.
With censured eyes, I watch
the rise and fall of your
breathing.

Today, when I returned home,
removed the *chador*,
a thousand portraits of you
lined the inside, one for each
breath you took in my
presence.