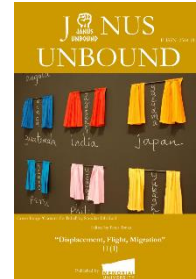


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Sally Khader



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## Complexities of Morning Coffee

I wake up in the early morning and the first thing I think of is coffee.  
My addiction to you points out my anxieties.  
You act like you are at peace.  
I just there sit jittering, worrying what you will think  
Of me if I forget you.

Changes.  
I had to try to stop drinking coffee. Politician's orders.  
It reminded too much of my homeland.  
But tea is not right for me.  
Nor I right for it, but I can't help thinking  
What if?  
Then I remember you're everything I want.

My coffee spills and leaves splashes and stains all across the map.  
Just as my coffee spills,  
My family scatters and gathers their closest belongings  
Before their home collapses.

You have a depth about you I would love to delve in.  
An existential study.  
That even the best critics would praise, but I haven't been there in a long time.  
I cannot hold on to you without remembering separation.

The soldiers tear us apart from each other and set us on different ships  
Thousands of miles away from the home we once had.  
Your aroma haphazardly glues our memories together.  
Messy, trying to see among all the dust,  
Beauty with the confusion.  
Our story is unfinished.

My destroyed home asks me  
Where am I most at peace,  
6 years old.  
I could be anything, build anything.  
No fears.  
When my dreams hadn't been ripped apart and shattered,  
I was the girl that wrote everything,

## Complexities of Morning Coffee

Until I felt the need to sensor my thoughts  
Like a coffee filter  
And silence my pen and paper,

Chaos.  
I wish I was home.  
The ghosts of war tell me that you like your women like your coffee.  
Dark and bitter.  
I wish life was simpler.  
But then I would never get to know your complexities  
Nor feel hate for war, fear of ghosts,  
Or the burning chime of a pistol.

Exile.  
You introduced me to offstage racism, your politics, and blaming eyes.  
And how you can feel frequencies that everyone else can't.  
I worry that you feel my fear in every sip, my voice and heartbreak with every  
word I speak.

War.  
When were you going to tell me?  
Or was that your plan all along?  
To throw me out like yesterday's coffee grounds or cut up scraps.  
Used and unwanted.  
I want my old home, a place of peace, safety and family.  
You want that plus things I can't give.  
But you always take.

You are your coffee  
Bitter, caffeinated, addicting.  
The only patch that keeps me going is comforting words you never spoke.  
We had many conversations of desires and mistakes,  
But I was burnt by lies and gun shots  
That left a harsh, acidic aftertaste.

Sally Khader

### **Biography**

Sally Khader has a master's degree in English Literature specializing in Resistance Literature and Cultural and Postcolonial Studies with first-class honors. As a Palestinian-American raised in the United States, she is all too familiar with the concept of cultural clash, and her sense of displacement pushed her to be the writer she is and inspires her to be the writer she wants to become.