

# Intertext

---

Volume 29 *Intertext* 2021

Article 16

---

1-1-2021

## The Day I Left

Nidaa Aljabbarin

Follow this and additional works at: <https://surface.syr.edu/intertext>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Aljabbarin, Nidaa (2021) "The Day I Left," *Intertext*. Vol. 29 , Article 16.

Available at: <https://surface.syr.edu/intertext/vol29/iss1/16>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by SURFACE at Syracuse University. It has been accepted for inclusion in *Intertext* by an authorized editor of SURFACE at Syracuse University. For more information, please contact [surface@syr.edu](mailto:surface@syr.edu).

## The Day I Left

Nidaa Aljabbarin

*Ya beet jede, tha'a al maftah, wa bouabak tebki ala elrah*

Oh grandfather, our house key is lost, and the doors cry for those who left.

I wake up, and my eyes immediately forget the taste of a good sleep.

I look around wondering what there is left to see.

I see my grandfather, the vessel, and the house key.

I look at the vessel, not understanding what I see. I see my grandfather's eyes as he prepares to face his fears. Fears that we're all leaving, like drops of tears.

I walk out of the house not knowing why I must leave. Everyone holds my hands, giving me something I need. Then my grandfather asks me, "Where is the house key?"

I don't know, *jede*.

Will we be back to use this key again?

Will the doors be there to greet us?

I set foot in the street, knowing what my body needs.

My thoughts fight among themselves, bleeding into tears.

I don't recognize the look in my grandfather's eyes

He looks as if he is about to face his worst fear.

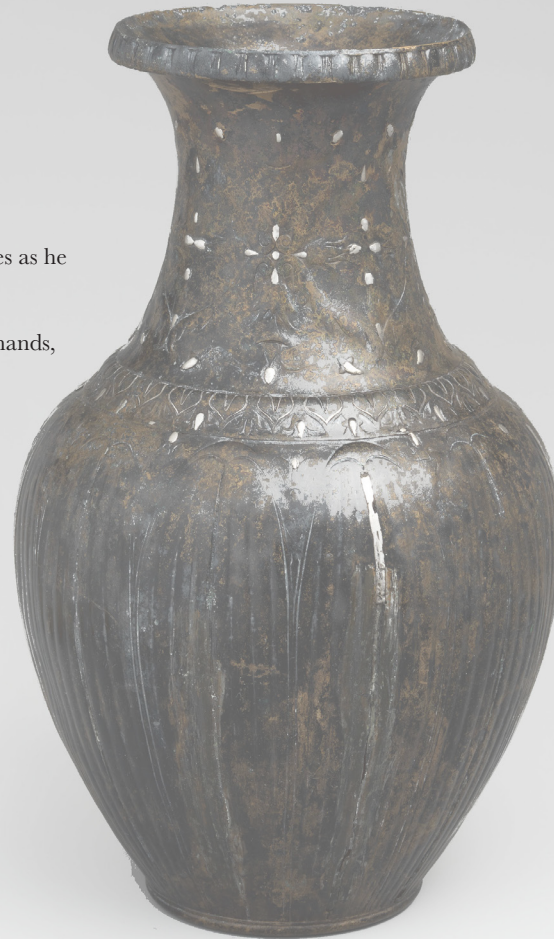
The fear turns into a teardrop.

He takes his glasses off, but the tear is stubborn

It refuses to leave his face.

*Ya beet jede, tha'a al maftah, wa bouabak tebki ala elrah*

Oh grandfather, our house key is lost, and the doors cry for those who left.



**N**idaa Aljabbarin was born and raised in Syria. She lived there until she was thirteen when she fled to Jordan during the war. After three years in Jordan, she and her family (with eight siblings) came to the U.S. in late 2016. She received her high school diploma from a public high school in Syracuse and after graduating, completed a specialty degree in math and science at Onondaga Community College. She then transferred to SU, where she is currently a junior pursuing her B.A. in biology on a premed track.

I had the pleasure of meeting with Nidaa to discuss writing and how her time at the NSLC helped shape her identity. She explained, "Writing with the Narratio Fellows, it basically helped me share my thoughts, what I've gone through. Not only to my friends, but to the world." That sense of outreach is important to Nidaa, who was able to connect to a broader audience. "It's telling your story," she explained, "in a different, creative, and better way."

We discussed the importance of finding a sense of community and camaraderie with those who understand you and your history. She explained, "When we started, we didn't know a lot, but as time went on, we got so close that we almost memorized each other's poetry." Before her performance, she said, "Having eye contact with them—the group—made me more comfortable because they were the people who know."

To learn more about "Vessel," visit [www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/325841](http://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/325841).