

Close Your Borders

**Ousama Haji
Hasan**

Close your borders as you want
Let us sleep instead near the tree that God created

Close your borders
let not even a fly or a mosquito cross
and don't think how much those who sleep near your border
are trapped in shapeless time, minuteless space
are a kind of dead needing passage to be back alive again

Close it, lock it, and throw the keys
into the middle of the sea or even
off of this earth

Close it and gather all the guards of the land and sky to patrol
it
abandon these wayfarers
don't let them think about life resuming again

You have the right to close it
because it's your border, not a path for passersby
or those who come to escape from the hells of earth
from the purgatory of immobility

Close your borders because you are sovereigns of your land
and you have the right to choose
whatever you want

But did you read about the misérables?
Did you visit empty lands settled by ghosts?
Have you ever seen a child crying for his dad killed near him
or a mother whose children flew to the sky?

They and others come to your border

You are like a god on this earth
But when you close the borders
you choose atrocity

Tell us:
If you owned the sky, would you close it?
If you owned the sea, would you let my boat sail to you?

We don't come because we are visitors
and we don't cross the sea because we are adventurous
nor because your food is more delicious than our mothers'
food

You have what these sleepers need
and enough food for that hunger
You have the lighted pathway we dream towards
the one that gives safety from fear
My memory is full of life and love and land lost
Sorry if I took minutes from your time to inform you:
There are others who need you
I am just one
waiting near your border, praying

Ousama Haji Hasan is a 33-year-old Syrian poet and aspiring physical therapist assistant. He was born in Aleppo, Syria, and graduated from the Aleppo University Law School in 2015. After the war broke out in Syria, he fled to Turkey, Greece, and Cyprus before eventually settling in the United States in 2021. He has published two poems in *Zine* and *Oxford* magazines. He is currently working on his first collection of poetry as well as a novel. He is passionate about using his writing to share his experiences as a refugee as well as to advocate for peace and justice. He is also planning to study to be a physical therapist assistant in the United States. He is excited to start this new chapter in his life.