

## A CHILDLESS WIFE

*I sit behind the window bars  
and peer through the evening sand,  
bags of it*

*entombing the range,  
barricading the view.*

*The hours,  
thick like musty fluid,  
trail on with heavy paces  
and return full circle.*

*The air a sallow crust,  
burns in the corridor  
pushing into the room.*

*I remain in my chair  
and hear the crack  
of skin-bark.*

*I stare into the dark:  
the reek of mossy swamps hits the room.*

*Dazed with the fumes,  
I fall asleep:*

*his hands caress  
rosy arms and legs  
that pierce the dark,  
flash across the room,  
kicking against walls  
like bloated sandbags.*

*The aroma of juices  
spurts from a rose-tree  
in the middle,  
right under the window sill,  
where my chair is.*

*I wake up with a pounding heart.  
I hear the creaky chair,  
and the stale air  
in holes and corners.*

Samira Aghacy



"Pause Café", 1993, oil on canvas. Leila Baydoun Chalabi