



The little coffee shop of Kabul

also called, *Cup of friendship*

By Deborah Rodriguez

First published in 2011

Genre & subjects

Friendship fiction

Life in Afghanistan fiction

Synopsis

"People, even those closest to you, are surprising...Nobody is everything they seem."

Deborah Rodriguez's bestselling novel about a little café in Kabul, and the five extraordinary women who meet there ... In a little coffee shop in one of the most dangerous places on earth, five very different women come together. Sunny, the proud proprietor, who needs an ingenious plan - and fast - to keep her café and customers safe... Yazminda, a young pregnant woman stolen from her remote village and now abandoned on Kabul's violent streets ... Candace, a wealthy American who has finally left her husband for her Afghan lover, the enigmatic Wakil ... Isabel, a determined journalist with a secret that might keep her from the biggest story of her life... And Halajan, the sixty-year-old den mother, whose long-hidden love affair breaks all the rules.

As these five discover there's more to one another than meets the eye, they form a unique bond that will for ever change their lives and the lives of many others.

Author biography

Debbie Rodriguez is an American author and hairdresser. After the fall of the Taliban in 2001, she moved to Afghanistan as part of a humanitarian group offering aid.

She became involved in the set up of a beauty school training program to certify Afghan women to work in and set up their own beauty parlours. Rodriguez wrote her first and best selling book, *Kabul Beauty School*, about her experiences.

Discussion starters

- Who was your favourite character, and why?
- Of all the characters in the story, who do you think was the most brave and/or inspiring?
- A working title for this novel was *The Seventh Dove*. What does Halajan's story about the doves mean, and why does it have such a strong effect on Sunny?
- 'Every character in the novel is hiding something.' Do you agree with this statement?
- Discuss each character's secrets and subterfuges.
- Five women are at the heart of this novel. But what do you think of the representation of men?
- Did anything surprise you about the portrayal of Yazminda and Halajan? What facets of their characters stood out for you?
- What was the most shocking thing you learnt about life for women in Afghanistan?

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