

Home Themes

Writer: Warsan Shire | Generated: Jan 26, 2026

Forced Migration and War: The poem shows that people never leave home willingly. They leave only when war and danger destroy safety. Home becomes the “mouth of a shark” and “the barrel of a gun.” These images mean death and fear. War turns streets into battlefields and neighbours into enemies. People run for the border because they have no choice. The poet shows that migration is not freedom but survival.

Survival and Trauma: Refugees face great pain during their journey. They hide in trucks, crawl under fences, and cross dangerous seas. Many die of hunger, beating, or drowning. Those who survive live in refugee camps like prisoners. They lose their homes, families, and peace of mind. The speaker feels broken and says, *“I don’t know what I’ve become.”* Still, people continue to live and protect their children. Their will to survive is stronger than their suffering.

Racism and Identity Crisis: Even after escaping war, refugees do not find peace. They are insulted and rejected in foreign lands. People call them dirty and unwanted. The speaker feels unwelcome and ashamed of not belonging anywhere. She loses her identity and feels lost between two worlds (Own Country & New Country). Her beauty and language are no longer valued. The poet shows how refugees suffer not only from war but also from racism and isolation.

Humanity and Longing for Home: The poem ends with a deep human message. The speaker still loves her home but cannot return. Home is dangerous, yet it lives in her heart. She thanks Allah for safety but remembers war’s cruelty. The poet asks the world to understand refugees with kindness. Refugees are not strangers or enemies. They are human beings forced to run for their lives. The poem teaches empathy, peace, and respect for all who suffer.