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Coffee House

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Coffee House

Gladys pulls at her nylons, already
bunching at her ankles.

She lays her tray on an empty
table and sits in the vinyl booth--
Resting a moment before the chaos
begins.

Outside a single star brightens
the dusky sky as
morning nears.

She hears Clyde scraping around
in the kitchen,

Preparing for the day's orders.

Susie hums as she fills the coffee pots
with water

and Sam pushes his broom swiftly over
the sticky tile floors.

The newspaper lands with a
Whack

Against the concrete steps.

A customer, the first of the day,
picks up the paper, comes inside,
causing the little bell to
tinkle softly.

He lays his coat over the back of a booth,
his hat on the table,

spreads the paper out
studies it for a moment

then looks out the window at the sunrise.

Gladys sighs,
stands

"May I take your order, Sir?"

Julie Hinkle