



**2019 REFUGEES & HUMAN RIGHTS  
CHILD & YOUTH POETRY CONTEST  
DIVISION 2 – GRADES 7 TO 8**

**BIANCA DE SOUZA, GRADE 8  
ST. JOACHIM ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
HONOURABLE MENTION**

**A TIME FOR CHANGE**

Isabel, across the Atlantic Ocean in a handmade boat  
Josefs mother told her kids “never take off your coat”  
Mahmoud swimming for his life when he falls of a dinghy  
We know how it goes, but it’s more than just a story

We see refugees as a problem in our society  
We lock all our doors, maybe we should find the key  
We can’t see, we’re almost blind it seems  
Refugees too, have hopes and dreams

It’s not only a rule, to love one another  
It’s time for us to look at the bigger picture  
While we stare, and look down all day on our phones  
Families are split from war, children are left alone

The world is a changing story  
We are the authors of today  
Do we choose to change the story  
Or do we let it all turn grey

We have the pencil  
We can educate the world  
“Manana is yours”  
Where is all our hope?

Refugee isn’t just a title  
It’s so much more, you see?  
Refugees aren’t the disease  
They’re the cure for humanity



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**ISABEL LESAR, GRADE 8  
ST. TIMOTHY CATHOLIC  
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
HONOURABLE MENTION**

**SUFFERING IN SILENCE**

The same earth we were brought upon, full of hope and good times, until people realized those faint little lines. The lines that divide us.

The people of hate and the ones that seek refuge day after day.  
With each step we take, we are only ever castaways.

Can't you see that we are just people and that we should be free?

But once again I see that I am only a silent refugee.

We are the same. Human is human; we both scream and shout, but for me no words ever come out.

We are the same. Except that I live through the stuff that you only learn about.

I live my life like a match in the dark, but all the lighters are broken, like my now ripped out heart.

I try to slip away silently in the dead of the night, only to be caught by your nosey flashlight.

But a boy did that once – slipped away, only to be caught the very next day.

So, I stay here in this prison cell, I can't even yell, no light shines down on me, not even from the sun.



I've tried to be silent, wait it out, see if it would pass, but this torture you've brought me it just seems to last.

As I fall and I tumble down a dreary stone path, a camera passes by me to see my swift dash.

"We're reporting for national T.V" you say, but I think to myself, why not just help me today?

I'm fleeing my country faraway; no place is safe. Not land. Not sea. They're out to get me. But don't worry, not you, just me.

When human turns on human, catastrophes begin, bad things start to happen, and no one ever wins.

Discrimination has only one way. Down. Down. Down.

Until there is no more left to separate – no skin colour, no beliefs, no religion, until we are all the same,

and that will be a dark day. Darker than the ones I live now.

I feel like a fly, being swatted with a fly swatter over and over, but doesn't my torturer know that if they just opened a

window, I would fly out? Yet they keep me here playing this sick little game of cat and mouse.

It's an all-time low really, when you relate more to a fly than a human being, but that's just what the world has come to.

Rotten to the core, and I hate to believe it, but I just can't see the good no more.

But humankind has rights and a choice, and I've realized that refugees have a voice.

So I'm calling out to you – I'm calling out for help, I'm done being silent. The words must come out!



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**NIMRAT KALIRAI, GRADE 8  
ECOLE MUNNS PUBLIC SCHOOL  
HONOURABLE MENTION**

**NUMBNESS**

This was the place I once called home,  
Now all that's left is cement and cracked stone.  
Among the rubble, I see pieces of my old life,  
Littered throughout as if it'd been sliced with a knife.

That moment keeps playing in my head on repeat,  
When my home and everyone in it collapsed into the street.  
Crashes and bang tore through the night,  
Our lives will never be the same, try as we might.

Countless bodies cover the grounds,  
But I'm too afraid of what could be found.  
Many of my loved ones are still missing cases,  
I fear that if I look down at the bodies, I might see their faces.

Everyone is crying. They're devastated and depressed,  
Memories of those lost held to their chests,  
There is no greater pain I can imagine than this,  
Where there was joy and hope, there is now only an abyss.

Reality is worse than any nightmare I've had;  
One moment I had it all, in the next it all went bad.  
Wake me up please, tell me none of this true,  
I'd give anything for that ill-fated day to undo.

