



**2020 REFUGEES & HUMAN RIGHTS  
CHILD & YOUTH POETRY CONTEST  
DIVISION 1 - GRADES 4 TO 6**

**ANAMARIA SAVIC, GRADE 5  
BAYTHORN PUBLIC SCHOOL  
SECOND PLACE**



**RESILIENCE**

My parents were refugees but now they are doing well  
And let me tell you that back then, things were not as swell

It was loud, scary, terrifying  
And don't even let me mention all of the crying

Their old country was at a terrible war  
But now they live in Canada, a country they will love forevermore

It felt like being stung by the largest bee  
My dearest parents were refugees

Their hearts sank as they saw the situation growing  
Their neighborhood was not like it once was

They watched with their very own eyes  
As their town got eaten up by sharp, greedy jaws

They had to go far, far away  
Hoping that this will all resolve some day

Running away and escaping somewhere safe  
Its now or never go, go, go

My parents were refugees who are no longer in sorrow  
Cupid gave their love to me with his bow and arrow.



**2020 REFUGEES & HUMAN RIGHTS  
CHILD & YOUTH POETRY CONTEST  
DIVISION 2 – GRADES 7 TO 8**

**FAYE BLOCK, GRADE 7  
ROBBINS HEBREW ACADEMY  
SECOND PLACE**



**THE LIGHT AT THE END**

I recall seeing the little girl, stumbling across the road  
Her big, pleading black eyes piercing into my blue ones  
A bright red scar across her face, masked with dirt and scratches  
A crumpled letter from her mother, praying for somebody to save her  
Look at the light at the end, the note begs, instead of the gloomy tunnel

I wonder what she has been through  
Did she carry jugs of water on her head?  
Jugs heavy with bleak, painful memories  
Weighing down her frail, trembling body?

Has she felt the throbbing agony of a belt on her back?  
A belt that bruised her mother, and her sister, too  
Causing shiny, salty tears to trail down her delicate cheeks?

Was she forced to work in a factory, that filled her lungs with horrid smoke?  
Or perhaps she watched her older sister marry a strange man she's never met  
Or wept after her father was taken or murdered

I gaze into the girl's glassy eyes  
And remember how fortunate, how lucky I am  
How I have the strength that can help this fragile girl  
Guide her through the dreary tunnel  
Comfort her in times of longing and depression

And give her the power  
The sheer, beautiful power  
To see the light  
At the end of the tunnel



## 2020 REFUGEES & HUMAN RIGHTS CHILD & YOUTH POETRY CONTEST DIVISION 3 – GRADES 9 TO 12

### NIMRAT KALIRAI, GRADE 9 IROQUOIS RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL SECOND PLACE



### FLOTSAM OF HUMANITY

I don't remember what my life was like at two years old.  
I look back at old pictures, see myself swinging joyfully on the swings at the local park;  
See myself eating birthday cake before I've even blown out the candles.  
When you don't have to worry about shelter and security and survival,  
You forget just how critical these things are to your well-being.  
You often forget to count your blessings.

Alan was only two years old.  
On the news, he lies face-down at the edge of the water.  
Red shirt, blue shorts, barefoot, tiny arms limp by his sides.  
Seeing his small, unmoving body, you prayed you heard wrong.  
Forced to flee his home, before he could even pronounce his own name.  
So young. So fragile. Yet, gone before his life had even begun.

Alan's story opened the world's eyes.  
He was the face of the refugee crisis and it tore at everyone's heart  
But only for a moment, before it became business as usual.  
We hear the number of fatalities on the news every once in a while,  
But it's all too easy to forget that behind every digit is a life;  
Is a mother. A father. A child. A grandparent. A friend. A neighbour.

Millions of lives continue to be lost and each life is one too many.  
We cannot continue to ignore those who are suffering.  
We need to speak for those who cannot speak, and fight for those who cannot fight.

It's up to you now: you can choose to advocate to change the narrative.  
Or you can continue to ignore the issue, leave it for someone else to solve.  
Choose wisely. Choose with conscience. Choose humanity.