

WORLD REFUGEE DAY
Refugee and Human Rights
Child and Youth Poetry Contest



UNHCR

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
Haut Commissariat des Nations Unies pour les réfugiés



1st Prize Award Recipient
Group II: Grades 7 to 8
MERCEDES KILLEEN
13 Years Old, Grade 8
Christ the King

Escape

I could taste the flavour of our vivid nation on my tongue,
which the hostility and bloodshed managed to dilute.
For I cherished its warmth,
embraced the spirit,
and counselled its youth.

Yet with my entire body trembling,
I laid down on the racked surface I knew as the floor.
Tears streamed down my rueful face,
as the sun's rays beat down on my broken body,
and I yearned to flee through the door.

The aching in my heart simply wanted relief-
for any remedy to chase away the fear.
Each day the tears became greater,
flooding my distressed soul that knew
of the heartless soldiers marching near.

With escape as my only choice,
my heart began to race.
I choked on my breath as sweat trickled down my skin,
and desperately prayed for grace.

My sister and I packed our entire lives,
into a mere few torn up bags.
Kissed the village goodbye,
and grasped each other's shaking hands.