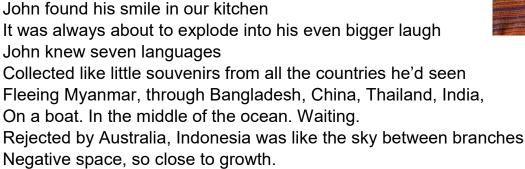


2022 REFUGEES & HUMAN RIGHTS CHILD & YOUTH POETRY CONTEST

DIVISION 2 - GRADES 7 TO 8

LYLA BIRRELL, GRADE 7 FERN AVENUE PUBLIC SCHOOL FIRST PRIZE

IN THE KITCHEN



In his country the mangos were free.

If his mom ever found out he ate pork she would be furious
The first time I ate his food the spices spoke,

Every meal the conversation with my taste buds got deeper

It wasn't the same with me and John Do you need help with the dishes, I asked, he said thank you So do you want help? Thank you, he said.

Why did you make the cake batter pink? I asked, It's your favourite colour; you're a girl My favourite colour is green,

He recalled girls being trafficked, he was jittery, his voice compressed

What are you watching? I asked Mr. Bean. His chin flicked to the computer, his signature move. I sit and watch and our smiles explode.

John was so eager to leave the house, get out in the world, he was so often riding his bike.

Then he left our kitchen.

