

# You Don't Know What Refuge Is- National Poetry Day 2023

## Poem

*By Esha K, 9 Green*

You don't know what refuge is until it grabs you tightly by the wrist  
You don't know what stress is until you apprehensively look at the asylum waiting list  
You don't know how much memories are worth until you witness your home alight  
You don't know how it feels to leave everything you have until your village is the target  
of the fight.

Migration is not like what you learn in a history lesson at school.  
Or the headlines featured in the news,  
In reality, moving country during an emergency can be both devastating and cruel,  
To migrate is something you are forced into; it's something you cannot choose.

Since the beginning of time, for thousands of years,  
Conflicts in politics led to the annihilation of towns and from what was once a  
bustling, joyful place, all that could now be heard were children's tears.  
At times, it seemed like for many, they would die of starvation as they walked on for  
miles ; it was too late.  
Food is more precious than you think, so don't waste anything on your plate.

Stalin, Mussolini, Hitler and other relentless oppressors,  
Chose just to attack and kill minorities and the lesser  
groups of people that society overlooked and saw as unnecessary threats  
And without much warning, people were made to leave or face a devastating  
consequence.

The final step: seeking asylum and a new place to call home,  
The anxious wait for a "Welcome!" or a "No"  
Three hundred thousand people apply each year in the United Kingdom alone,  
Unfortunately, many are told to find somewhere else to roam.

Friendships, memories, a beneficial education that millions have missed,  
You don't know what refuge is until it grabs you tightly by the wrist.

(Sources: Save the Children and gov.uk)