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Mrs. Lopez (can be shared)

World Literature-Honors

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A New Escape

The day started like any other, but that was soon to change. My husband, Mateo, and I often argued about the problems we were having financially but today it went too far. He hit me. This had never happened before, which is why I chose to ignore the bickering, but today that changed. It was a slap across the face, not too hard but hard enough to convey the message that this time things would change. In that moment, rage, confusion, and betrayal all rushed through my body. I stayed calm. I gathered a few of my most valuable belongings, and hit the road.

A few days had passed and I finally decided to attend a local training course run by NGO about preventing domestic violence. It was there that my life changed. There were all kinds of anxious people looking for a way out. But one of them was different. Her name was Vincenta. Unlike the other women, she wasn't looking for a way out. She was welcoming others in.

It started with just a few silly ideas being thrown out about helping Vincenta on her cacao plantation, but soon turned to much more. Eventually, our ideas came to life and we were all bringing home steady income and escaping our unwanted pasts. It was a way for us to feel as if we, women, had power. It made me feel useful. In a sense, it was a time where people needed me and I needed them, we all worked together.

One day, disaster struck. COVID-19 struck and the market crashed. Knowing that if there isn't a need for cacao to be harvested there was no reason for us to work, we all began to panic.

“What are we gonna do”, “We are all doomed.” Among the terror in the air, there was hope.

Hope that Vincenta could find a way to make it work. She did, we all did. Although we lost many people, we gained many more and continued striving to be the best we could. With a few small changes in the business, we were back to normal.

Vincenta taught me that no matter the hardships, there is always a way to make the best of the situation. She showed everybody. No matter how hard her life was she was always putting others before herself. She had a bad knee, but that didn't bother her. She was on the plantation everyday working her hardest for our business to succeed. She was the person to look up to on the plantation.