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## Literature

In both the literary works, the stories revolve around two beautiful young ladies whose acts of wanting to have a good life ended them in the hands of a brutal older man. Hortensia was 15 years old who used to sing at the village pub. Amadeo, who was two times older than her, took advantage of desperation and left the village without knowing her name. It is only through her persistence that she looked for Amadeo, who saw another opportunity to use her and put her as a slave in his old sugar mill that stops working two generations ago. She lived under this horrible condition for 47 years (Isabel, 1989). Connie was also fifteen when she developed a habit of not listening to her mother. Unlike her elder Sister June, Connie did nothing in the house but only focused on her beauty because she was ever behind a mirror admiring herself. The laziness in her made her hate her mother, and she even wished they could all die. As a result, her stubbornness and the urge to have a fancy life drove her to hang around a lousy group which made her meet bad people. Arnold Friend, an older man leading a gangster life, followed her to her home after earlier promising to find her at the shopping plaza. Even though she is against going with him, she finds no otherwise for fear of what might happen to her and her family (Oates, 1966).

These two young women lack sufficient guidance in their lives because, at their ages, it is essential for someone to step in to help them make decisions that can enable them better their future. Poverty pushed Hortensia to follow Amadeo, who was never busy with her. Simultaneously, Connie's father was an absentee parent who only focused on his job and forgot to nurture her daughter towards a better future. Thus, teenagers must be adolescents and require firm guidance to make formed life choices at fifteen. If left unguided, they can easily throw their lives into the dustbins since they are easily swayed by "the fancy life" bad older men may lie to

offer to them. Therefore, the two girls messed their lives by not focusing on bettering their future but being allowed to be deceived by the short-lived pleasures offered to them through shortcuts.

The men in the two stories take advantage of the vulnerabilities of the young girls who fall prey. In "Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?" <sup>1</sup> Arnold Friend takes advantage of Connie's vulnerability because she is alone at home since her family members had gone to the barbeque. He knows too well that the information he had gathered about Connie will make her nervous and helpless when he mentions them to him, leaving her with no option but to submit. He mentioned to her about her dead neighbor who used to sell chicken and threatened that if she dared called the police, then the same thing will happen to her family, and this frightened Connie, and she decided to leave that idea of calling the police (Oates, 1966).

Moreover, in the story of "If You Touch My Heart," Amadeo takes advantage of the poverty of Hortensia, who endured all the slavery he subjected to him just as long as he could provide her with food and water. Hortensia not questioned anything and did not notice anything wrong with her; neither did she notice change in her body. She was comfortable because Amadeo could always supply her with sacks of foodstuffs despite her yellow dress rotting from her body (Isabel, 1989).

The two stories teach us that we should always ensure that we work hard to better our future and avoid shortcuts as young ladies. They also show us that it is always right to listen to our parents to avoid falling into traps that might ruin our lives as moral lessons. They further teach us that however well connected, wealthy and dangerous we may be, if we abuse young girls' rights and take advantage of them, we must end up in jail one day.

### References

Isabel, A. (1989). If You Touched My Heart: The Stories of Eva Luna. New York Times

Oates, J. C. (1966). Where Are You Going. *Where Have You Been*, 338.

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