10. "Vengeance Is Not Ours, It's God's"

Alms, alms, alms. Spare me a piece of bread. Spare me your mercy. I am a child so young, so thin, and so ragged.Why are you staring at me? With my eyes I cannot see but I know that you are all staring at me. Why are you whispering to one another? Why? Do you know my mother? Do you know my father? Did you know me five years ago?

Yes, five years of bitterness have passed. I can still remember the vast happiness mother and I shared with each other. We were very happy indeed.

Suddenly, five loud knocks were heard on the door and a deep silence ensued. Did the cruel Nippon's discover our peaceful home? Mother ran to Father's side pleading. "Please, Luis, hide in the cellar, there in the cellar where they cannot find you," I pulled my father's arm but he did not move. It seemed as though his feet were glued to the floor.

The door went "bang" and before us five ugly beasts came barging in. "Are you Captain Luis Santos?" roared the ugliest of them all. "Yes," said my father. "You are under arrest," said one of the beasts. They pulled father roughly away from us. Father was not given a chance to bid us goodbye.

We followed them mile after mile. We were hungry and thirsty. We saw group of Japanese eating. Oh, how our mouths watered seeing the delicious fruits they were eating,

Then suddenly, we heard a voice call, "Consuelo. . . . Oscar. . . . Consuelo. . . . Oscar. . . . Consuelo. . . . Oscar. . . ." we ran towards the direction of the voice, but it was too late. We saw father hanging on a tree. . . . dead. Oh, it was terrible. He had been badly beaten before he died. . . . and I cried vengeance, vengeance, vengeance! Everything went black. The next thing I knew I was nursing my poor invalid mother.

One day, we heard the church bell ringing "ding-dong, ding-dong!" It was a sign for us to find a shelter in our hide-out, but I could not leave my invalid mother, I tried to show her the way to the hide-out.

Suddenly, bombs started falling; airplanes were roaring overhead, canyons were firing from everywhere. "Boom, boom, boom, boom!" Mother was hit. Her legs were shattered into pieces. I took her gently in my arms and cried, "I'll have vengeance, vengeance!" "No, Oscar. Vengeance, it's God's," said mother.

But I cried out vengeance. I was like a pent-up volcano. "Vengeance is mine not the Lord's". "No, Oscar. Vengeance is not ours, it's God's" these were the words from my mother before she died.

Mother was dead and I was blind. Vengeance is not ours? To forgive is divine but vengeance is sweeter. That was five years ago, five years. . . .

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