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Family of Four

Heavy with Another Child

by Agote Grace

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My husband died and left me with two children. He had been sick, on and off, but at the same time strong enough to dig. We used to grow cassava; millet, cotton, and we were able to survive. Then he became very sick and in a few days he died. I believe he was poisoned because his stomach swelled and his skin turned very dark. The most terrible thing that can happen to any woman is to lose a husband.

I live with my widowed mother-in-law in the same compound. Life is hard; it was my late husband who was supporting both of us. The biggest problem I have is accommodation. My house is in a bad state. My husband had intended to repair it but unfortunately, he fell sick before he did it. When my husband passed away, the Director and the Coordinator of Woman of Purpose came to pay their condolences to the family and me. When they saw the state of my house, they promised they would help me with the repair of the roof. I am very grateful

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because the roof was repaired before the heavy rains started, otherwise, the whole house would have fallen down. I am also happy that they were able to talk to my late husband's relatives about the rights of widows and told them that they should support me as much as they can.

A few weeks after my husband's death, I discovered that I was pregnant. Now I am quite heavy with another child and I do not know what to do. I just leave everything to God. I do not want to think a lot about the future. Sometimes I wish I had also died, but then, when I think of my children, I pray to God to keep me so that I can bring them up. I have seen many orphans suffering a lot and I would not like my children to suffer like that. Even if I cannot give them much, we shall survive with the little I get. I get my income by digging in other people's gardens and am paid five hundred or one thousand shillings – depending on the portion I have dug. I am only worried about what will happen when I give birth, because I will have to take some two weeks without digging. My mother-in-law is a good woman. She is a Christian. She helps me care for the children when I go to dig. We cook together and eat whatever we can. I pray she remains like that. Sometimes when the husband dies, everyone turns against the widow – adding hurt to injury.

Comments or inquiries about this story?

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