**Philli**

The Girls Hope Rescue Mission (GHRM) has impacted the lives of many vulnerable Kenyan girls, and some of those girls have gone on to college and are now doing what they can to help the downtrodden and defenseless. One of these women is named Philli, whose story is one of strength and perseverance despite hardship. As a girl, Philli was raised in a small Kenyan village, and her life was plagued with grief, having lost both of her parents tragically.

Philli entered foster care and was under the protection of a woman she hoped would be her new mother. Stricken with poverty, Philli’s foster mother couldn’t afford to send Philli to school; they often did not know where their next meal would come from. Philli’s foster mother, in desperation and reaction to their financial peril, decided to sell Philli as a child bride at only ten years of age. Despair was a constant at this time, as Philli feared each day that she might be sent away at her caretaker's gain. Although she was unable to trust her foster mother, Philli saw no other choice than to do what was asked of her.

In a miraculous series of events, one of Philli’s relatives, horrified by the thought of young Philli having to be a child bride, contacted Gladwell Wachira, the founder of the Girls Hope Rescue Mission. Gladwell brought Philli into her watchful care and gave her a true home in the Mission. Philli said that upon arrival at GHRM, she felt, “absent-minded like she couldn’t think straight, a nobody.” but eventually, with Gladwell’s warmth and care, she was able to feel safe and comfortable. Although the fear of what could have been still lingered at times, Philli found the will to power through the haze and make the long walk each day to study with a teacher named Madam Jackie. Philli described Madam Jackie as, “a friendly woman who easily interacted with students.” These were rich days when Philli developed a love for life and a deep caring for others. In time, Philli began seeing the other children housed at GHRM as “brothers and sisters.”

Today, Philli has finished her first year in college, studying social work and community engagement. Through the resources provided by the GHRM, she has been able to afford further education, a rare opportunity not many Kenyan women receive. Now when Philli returns to GHRM each school break, she sees the girls in the Mission as “someone's daughter, someone who will do good.” GHRM truly rescued Philli, and she now wants to help rescue others.