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# An escape

**P**overty comes at a miserable toll and escaping it can often trap people in a vicious cycle with no way out. For Juna, a 28-year-old domestic worker in Bhimdutta Municipality, life had been a series of unpleasant surprises.

Juna migrated from Kusma Municipality, Parwat to Kanchanpur in search of a better life. In a new place, however, Juna's best shot was to work as a domestic worker, given the job demanded fewer skills. A friend of hers helped her secure a job at the home of an elderly couple. The employers were kind to her, and the work was not too demanding. Juna was happy to have a job of a decent pay where she got to work for a nice family.

Days passed by without incident until one morning when Juna's landlady prepared to leave to visit relatives in a nearby village. Juna was asked to look after her husband and given special instructions to ensure he took his medication on time. It wasn't an unusual request, but Juna nearly forgot to attend to her employer's medication while being alone. She only recalled to give him the medication after she completing her tasks for the day and was about to go to bed. Juna went toward her landlord's room and made a loud call to remind him of the meds. Instead of taking them himself, he asked Juna to bring them to him. Hesitantly, Juna stepped into his bedroom. In a split second, her landlord locked the door from the inside and started sexually assaulting her. He threatened Juna to keep quiet, warning her of the consequences if she revealed the truth.

One incident then gradually became a daily occurrence, as the landlord would find an occasion after another to assault Juna. Her mental wellbeing grew heavily disturbed, and she started losing her focus at work. Juna began to seek a way to escape, and as desperate as she was, she met people who shared her hopes of finding a job in India. It didn't take long for her to make up her mind and implement her plan to escape.

However, Juna was intercepted at Gaddachauki border crossing while she was traveling to India. She was unable to answer the officials' questions, and it became clear that she didn't know where exactly she was headed or what work she was going to do. Her parents were also not aware of her decision. Thus, Juna was deemed as vulnerable to trafficking in persons and referred to Peace Rehabilitation Center (PRC).

Once referred to the PRC, Juna underwent a thorough psychosocial counseling. With multiple sessions, Juna started to unburden herself of her pain and sorrow as she disclosed her past experiences. Based on her testimony, the PRC coordinated with the Nepal Police to locate her family in Parwat. After great efforts, Juna was finally reunited with her family.