Marriage and Family Class

Student’s Name

Institution

Professor

Date

**Background**

Born in the middle 70s, Joy has lived a less worthy life that she cannot even explain how she managed it. Surprisingly, she didn’t have an idea about how her father looked. All she knew is that her father was taken away by the government after she was born. Her mother Mary was the sole breadwinner in a family of three. At the age of twelve, her mother dies of diabetes. This puts a stop to Joy’s normal life as she is forced to quit school and look for means in which she could support her brothers regarding food, clothing and paying house rent. Six months later, the landlord evict them from the house for failure to pay rent areas.

She turns to a distant relative who accepts to let them move in on condition that she will be working helping them perform some house duties. Joy sees this as an opportunity for them to get educated. A year later, the family turns abusive and she is forced to quit school by her Uncle, Tom, and be performing all house chores. She is to some extent beaten and scars were ever present on her facial skin. As days went by, she overheard of her uncle’s plans to get her married. In their community, a girl as young as ten could be sold to older men that were well of in the society. Dowry talks continued and until they became aware that Joy did not undergo a crucial rite of passage in the community which is female genital mutilation (FGM).

Girls at the age of thirteen were supposed to undergo the heinous act, but luckily Joy escaped the practice. Her age mates could occasionally put pressure on her to go through the ordeal other avoiding her as she was not equal to them. All her efforts to run away deemed futile as her uncle kept a close look at her all the time. Her brothers didn’t have an idea about what was going on. Tom was determined to do everything possible to ensure he receives the full dowry price. He organizes for some young men to kidnap her and forcefully circumcised her. They successfully perform the act, and she is finally married to the initial bidder.

She finds marriage life so different than she expected. Having in mind that her mother would make decisions for them, Joy could not decide anything in the family without consulting her husband, Mike. In the society, women were expected to obey their husband regardless of their opinion. This made them look like objects rather than a person who deserve care and attention. She would be beaten for no reason which made her so determined to flee away. An ideal woman was expected to cook, clean and bear children to the unloving husband. As years passed, she was unlucky that she was not able to conceive. A lady became accepted as a woman of the community upon giving birth to a child. Her self-esteem was low and at times did not find any reason to continue living. Upon endless trying, she gave up and was focused go as far as she could to avoid shame.

Her name Joy was ironical in a way that she was never happy and all her life could never recall a single day that she was happy. Mike decided to divorce her and turn attention to a younger lady. This was like a dream come true to Joy and immediately left to a town in the north. She came across a different society that was civilized. She asks for a house cleaning job where she is welcomed, given someplace to stay and accepted as one of their own. Joy works hard in her daily activities where she is appreciated and shown loves she deserves. She helps her brothers to complete their junior education.

Joy could no longer trust in men and was determined to forget everything that she went through. Since she was still at a tender age, men continued to show their interest in her, but she quickly ignored them. Her experience in the first marriage strengthened her as she was able to regain her self-esteem and sees herself as an important person with goals and aspirations that she needs to achieve. More to this, she is resolute to go back and complete her education but her finances were still not enough.

For the first time, Joy falls in love with Patrick after a courtship period of two years and does not hesitate to marry him on proposal. During this time, she is blinded by love and did not notice that Patrick’s drinking habit as an issue. Joy was able to conceive but had complications during delivery of the first kid due to the FGM that she had undergone (Steiner, Alston & Goodman, 2007). Her former village’s mid-wife helped her to deliver effectively. Three years later she was blessed with the second baby boy. Patrick becomes an alcohol addict and brings the family in deep financial crisis to the point that he was admitted to hospital since his kidneys were no longer functional (Nicholson, 1997). The assistance from friends helps them locate a person who was ready to offer one of his kidneys at a fee. Mobilization is done, and upon raising the amount, Patrick undergoes surgery and later taken to a rehabilitation center.

Through all this time, she firmly stands with her husband and quits job to look after him. Patrick recovers well and decides to be born again where church members contribute to them with foodstuffs and finances. Furthermore, they are both offered job opportunities in a local factory which acts as a game changer. The family is back on its feet and establishes itself as a God-fearing Christian household. Five years later, she lives a life she dreamt of and decides to empower young ladies from her former community.

Having realized that the FGM problem is not mainly in ladies, she sets the target on educating the elderly against preserving such demeaning practices which did not add any positive value to ladies but instead put them in a dangerous situation. This was faced with resistance from some member but they eventually accepted it upon being sensitized. This meant that girls could no longer be married off at an early age and could complete their education peacefully.

**References**

Nicholson, S. A. (1997). *Alcohol's effect on organ function*. Place of publication not identified: Diane Pub Co.

Steiner, H. J., Alston, P., & Goodman, R. (2007). *International human rights in context: Law, politics, morals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.