

Angel of the Garbage Dump: How Hanley Denning Changed the World, One Child at a Time

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Angel of the Garbage Dump is the biography of a courageous change-maker, Hanley Denning.

Denning first encountered the Guatemala City dump that she came to think of as “home” in 1999. Though her early experiences there were overwhelming, she stayed. She grew to know the people and the place well. She exercised compassion in her work, and was thoughtful about her problem-solving.

Later, Denning started a nonprofit, Safe Passage, that works to break the cycle of poverty through education, healthcare, nutrition, and social services. The book captures the essence of who she was and what she did—including the harrowing story of how her work continues to effect lasting change, even after her death in a car accident in 2007.

Drawing on interviews with Denning’s family and friends, as well as with Safe Passage staff members, this book conveys a deep sense of its Guatemalan setting. It mentions elements of Catholicism, violence, poverty, and resilience. And it sets all of these factors into the broader context of worldwide poverty. The raw photographs capture both the setting and its people in a humanizing, profound way.

Angel of the Garbage Dump is the inspiring biography of a woman who sought to change the world, beginning with one community.

MELISSA WUSKE (November / December 2022)

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