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In December 2019, I took a flight to Port-au-Prince, Haiti to take care of some administrative business at my mother's school in Ganthier, which is a small town 30 minutes away. Even though I was in the country for over a week, I was unable to leave the capital

due to prolific gang activity throughout the country. When there was less activity and chatter reported in the Ganthier area, my friend and I took the opportunity to go. As I took my first steps in front of my mother's childhood home and school in Haiti, I saw my godmother's wide eyes and agape mouth. She barely moved, still in shock as I embraced her. After a couple of minutes of awkward hugs and kisses, she whispered in panic, "What are you doing here?"

I then headed to a meeting that I and the school administrators arranged with the parents to go over the academic and safety plans. After listening to us, a mother stood up and expressed her thoughts. She recounted all the area's traumatic experiences at the hands of gang members and explained the fear she harbored for her small children. As she talked, I saw the same face of fear and anxiety that my godmother had reflected in the face of all the other parents. It is always said that Haitians are resilient, but sometimes that view of resiliency undermines the true extent of the pain and the anxiety from being in a constant state of survival. I knew of all the events she talked about from the news, but I realized that I placed myself so far removed from that reality, even as I traveled into the middle of it.

I am interested in the Herstory Writers Workshop because I want to help Haitians to share their stories and dare someone, even me, to care. Haitian culture is artistic, and story-telling is one of its main pillars. It manifests as oral tradition that is usually initiated by the call and response, "Krik?" and "Krak!" In written form, however, French has been the official language of the country, even though the true language of the people is Haitian Creole. Books and official written works are overwhelmingly in French, limiting the country's narrative to just the privileged.

Developing the tools and abilities that are offered by Herstory would help achieve the major goal of adding to my mother's school's curriculum. It would be a game-changing for these schoolchildren to express themselves in their main language and even develop their own skills through their peers' works.