



A SAFE FUTURE FOR ALL

The scene is set: waiters flit between guests, champagne in hand, cameras flashing, capturing a moment in time — this is in the foyer. Inside: twenty round tables surround the open ballroom floor with dancers ready to perform. It is a lavish affair with all the glamorous trimmings to match.

In hindsight, perhaps that is what makes the message of the event even more sombre: that the purpose of the evening was to support the Safe Futures Foundation, an organisation that takes care of domestic violence victims: from mothers, to their children.

It's an issue that does not discriminate: anyone can be a victim, from the needy to the affluent. And everyone involved is affected. A child who witnesses her mother being abused may internalise and normalise violence. They may become traumatised, and hold on to the suffering — silently — well into their adult lives. This suffering could materialise in a number of ways — violence, perhaps.

Janine Mahoney, the CEO of the Safe Futures Foundation sees this as the unending story of domestic violence. E-Charity CEO Helen Ng has personally experienced this story. Abused as a young girl, she has held on to the hurt for the majority of her adult life. But she is proof that the story doesn't have to end badly. Sometimes, regrowth can come from destruction.

It's like Pandora's box: despite the vices and the negativity that infiltrates some lives, there is always hope. This hope is at the heart of the Safe Futures Foundation, who has a special focus on providing children — not just parents — with the resources to reclaim their own life narrative. Children are after, the future of our society. Their future is also ours.

Helen Ng understands this — she has personally volunteered for the Foundation as a translator, helping vulnerable Chinese women find a foothold for themselves and their children in a foreign country. She herself knows how difficult it is to do this without adequate support. There is a pervasive and stifling culture of silence surrounding domestic violence, and it is not a culture one can escape without help.

And so we come back to that evening of glamour: the Charity Ball, where wine flowed freely and guests and performers alike danced uninhibitedly. With proceeds from the ball going to the Safe Futures Foundation, it was a night of many messages. One is that good can come from bad. The second is that battles are won together: one cannot go at it alone, but there will always be someone willing to offer a hand, or in this case, a ball.

