

In the fifties – a time where women weren't a big part of Hispanic Society – three brave young women, who were sisters, defied standards and the repressive government. The Maribol sisters Patria, Maria Teresa, and Minerva lived in the Dominican Republic during a time of great turmoil. The dictator Rafael Leonidas Trujillo Molina established the most totalitarian reign in the country's history. Anyone who had spoken against him would disappear. The sisters soon realized they were unwilling to live under his control. They became avid supporters of the underground *Movimiento Revolucionario 14 de Junio* (MR14J); they operated under the code name "Las Mariposas." They played huge parts in bringing down his corrupt regime, subsequently, were constantly jailed for their participation in protest and riots.

Next, the sisters were driving home from jail, when suddenly they were strangled and brutally clubbed to death. The government claimed it was a car crash. The death of Las Mariposas stunned the country, and anger arose. These heroines have become a symbol of activism among women and freedom for all in Hispanic culture. The day of their death marks International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. They did something incredible, and something that seemed impossible at the time, especially for women. Women had, as previously stated, a small role in society, and in addition to that, many people lived in fear of Trujillo because of the many disappearances that occurred. He led a reign of terror, and people didn't want to get hurt or have their families targeted. These three sisters understood that in order for change to happen, they would have to make a stand. It was certainly a feat that seemed like "it couldn't be done." They put hope in the country and changed the course of the revolution.

In addition to them sparking the flames of revolution, the eldest, Patria, got her law degree handed to her by Trujillo himself as well as his promise of never letting her practice the law. Trujillo took a particular interest in her. He had invited the sisters to a ball and immediately noticed her. He had made advances towards her that she did not acquiesce. Trujillo kept pestering her. He even invited Patria to a soirée; then his beach house, where she finally had enough and yelled at him in front of guests. Trujillo then interrogated her for weeks and jailed her father. This led to the families unified hatred for the leader. The sisters also married important revolutionary figures; this further stirred their involvement in the revolution.

Edgar Guest writes in his poem:  
"Somebody said that it couldn't be done,  
and he with a chuckle replied,  
that maybe it couldn't  
But he wouldn't be one  
who wouldn't say so till he'd tried."

This attitude of fierce determination is what the Maribol sisters had. Guest also writes, "There are thousands to prophesy failure; there are thousands to point out to you one by one, the dangers that wait to assail you." There were thousands that told the sisters to give up, that it was too dangerous for a man, let alone a woman. The sisters persisted and "with a lift of their chins and a bit of a grin," they fought together against the standards and against the repressive government. If they hadn't stood up for what they believed in, the horror of the times would've lasted forever.