

A Rose (1913-2003)

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It stood out from all those around it. It was more beautiful from any other. This flower was clothed in bright, deep colors. It was a crimson red rose with dark green leaves. Everyone that saw it, could attest to its beauty and humility. For this flower never boasted or tried to take any attention or credit. But for some reason everyone noticed its gentle spirit and its silence was louder than words.

And each day this flower woke up early to soak in the sun. It opened its eyes early, before the others, to enjoy God's creation and to sit in His presence. For this rose worshipped God and truly mirrored His beauty. It never defiled itself, it remained pure all its days for the Lord, waiting for the Savior to come and gather the flowers and roses.

As time passed, the rose grew in years and in wisdom. Godly knowledge and maturity radiated through its petals. But in the end times, it was very sick. It began to wither and its outer beauty was fading. Then deep trials came and the rose went through the horrible weeks and months of sickness and despair. In this difficult time, only family stood at its side and sometimes even they couldn't be there. Things got even harder, storm clouds filed the sky and strong winds roamed through the fields. Drought and floods tore down this once vibrant rose. It lost strength and health. It was now reduced to lying among the grass. It struggled daily to keep its head up, to take in some water or dew. And though the rose went through these horrible trials, it didn't lose its fragrance. Some beauty had faded and it was now pale, it lost all thorns to protect itself and could no longer stand and take in water. Though it was a sad sight, all who came near could still breathe in the beautiful scent of a rose inspired by God. It continued to mirror all God's beauty through its fragrance.

This rose is Gido Hanna Ibrahim. He lived a life of service to the Lord. All the people he encountered could see the Lord through him. Young and old, everyone was attracted to his inner beauty-- a gentle, meek and humble Spirit. He was a godly man and many looked up to him. In his last days, he passed through extreme difficulties. He spent many months in hospitals with tubes coming out of him and doctors and nurses constantly poking him with needles. His outer strength faded but inside the Lord was still there. Jesus was the visible factor in Gido. He quoted the Bible and prayed and sang. He didn't recognize his family or church but he recognized his Master. The Lord's spirit reigned in him, it was his body, soul, and mind. This beautiful rose continued to give off the amazing fragrance of Jesus.

And forever all who come afterwards, when they come near to Gido's memory, will breathe a wondrous breath of the scent of a rose.