



Rose

By Geoff Serpell

I share this story from an anonymous source about the first day of college when the Professor asked that we get to know someone we didn't already know. Next to me was a wrinkled, little old lady smiling, who said, "*hi handsome, my name is Rose. I'm eighty-seven years old. Can I give you a hug?*"

Saying yes, I asked, "*Why are you in college at such a young innocent age? I'm here to meet a rich husband, get married, and have a couple of kids...*" Seriously she then said, "*I always dreamed of having a college education and now I'm getting one.*"

Over the course of the year, Rose became a campus icon and she easily made friends wherever she went. She was living it up. Rose was invited to speak at a football banquet. She stepped up to the podium but dropped her prompt cards on the floor.

Reflection:

Growing older is mandatory, growing up is optional. We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give. God promises a safe landing, not a calm passage. If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it. Good friends are like stars, you don't always see them, but you know they are always there.

She said, "*I'm sorry I'm so jittery. I gave up beer for lent and this whiskey is killing me!*"

Off the cuff she said, "*we do not stop playing because we are old; we grow old because we stop playing. There are only four secrets to staying young, being happy and achieving success. You have to laugh and find humour every day. You must have a dream. When you lose your dreams, you die. We have so many people walking around who are dead and don't even know it! There is a huge difference between growing older and growing up. Anyone can grow older. The idea is to grow up by always finding opportunity in change. Have no regrets. The elderly usually regret things we did not do.*" She concluded by singing The Rose.

One week after graduation, Rose died peacefully in her sleep.