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The Fragrance of Roses

by Nikki Arana

About the Book

The clock is ticking and their son is dying. Only a miracle can save him.

Against all odds, attorney Angelica Amante married migrant worker Antonio Perez and became a stay-at-home mom for Manuel and Anica. Manuel was stricken with childhood cancer, but the family came through the crisis intact and considered Manuel their miracle child. God had indeed blessed them.

Or had He? When the deadly disease returns with a vengeance, threatening to rip away all that is precious to them, Antonio returns to Mexico in desperation to test his family members for a compatible donor for Manuel. Angelica must stay behind, watching her young son deteriorate as he suffers the ravages of chemotherapy and unexplained complications.

With only their faith in God and their love for each other to sustain them, Antonio and Angelica face the greatest battle of their lives.

Discussion Guide

1. The fragrance or scent of roses was mentioned several times in the book. What did it symbolize?

2. Manuel had an imaginary companion. Do you think there was more to it? Which passages in the book could lead you to believe that? What scriptural references are there regarding angels?

3. Chapter One opens with Anica making Manuel a crown out of construction paper. How was a crown used in the book to foreshadow the ending? What did it symbolize? Manuel cherished his paper crown; what passages in the book hint that he had a special understanding about it? Do you think he did?

4. Cirocco is a symbol for “the least of these” spoken about in Matthew 25. If you were traveling in Mexico and saw him, how would you have reacted to him? What if you had seen him dipping his shirt into the water at the foot of the statue, what would you have thought he was doing and why?

5. There are many examples in the book of God using the devastating circumstances of people’s lives to ultimately bless them and further his kingdom. How did he use Dr. Dorak, Ines, Cirocco, the missing men, and others?

6. There were many parallels drawn between the physical world and the spiritual world. One was the “truth” that life is in the blood. How was Manuel’s need for a blood donor a metaphor for Christ’s death on the cross? What other parallels did you see?

7. The principal, Jack O’Hare, had an agenda regarding prayer in school. His first tactic was to tell Angelica it was illegal to have prayer in school. What did Angelica find out about this issue? How did he use intimidation to further his agenda? What are you and your children’s rights regarding prayer in school?

8. In the Regalo Grande series, Antonio is a Christ figure. A perfect man. In this book, he is tempted to lie. What happens in Mexico that makes him vulnerable? If lying would save Manuel, should he have done it? What are the scriptural references that support your position?

9. Toward the end of the book Cirocco meets a crippled man in a restaurant. The man’s conversation is cryptic. Who was he? What was his purpose in appearing there? When he reappears later, what is the unspoken spiritual message of the two scenes?

10. Cirocco’s life on the street hardened him. What happened when he lay near death in the mountains? What did his dream reveal about the believers in his life? How can this be applied to your own life and the “Ciroccos” you meet?

11. Manuel was stricken with cancer. This book takes you on the journey of his healing. How many other “healings,” physical, spiritual, and emotional, took place because of what happened to Manuel?

12. How did God answer the prayers for Manuel’s healing? What are some examples of God answering your prayers in an unexpected way?

13. What was the crystal sea?

14. Do you think Benito Amante came to accept Jesus Christ as his personal Savior? Which passages in the book led you to believe he did or didn’t?

15. Many people have experienced different kinds of miracles that resulted in their children being healed of cancer and other diseases. Do you think a book like this offers false hope or real hope to people that find themselves in this situation? Is there such a thing as false hope? What are the scriptural references for your position?

Author Bio

Author and speaker Nikki Arana has received numerous awards for her writing, including the American Christian Fiction Writers’ Book of the Year award and Christianbook.com Top 20 Novel of the Year for THE WINDS OF SONOMA. Through her ministry, A Voice for the Persecuted, she inspires hearts toward evangelizing the Muslim community.

Critical Praise

"I was spellbound by Nikki Arana’s new book, **The Fragrance of Roses**. She makes me cry, makes me laugh, and makes my own walk with God more inspirational."

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