

# The perfume

One cold March morning, in a hospital, due to serious complications, a baby girl was born much earlier than expected, after only six months of pregnancy.

She was a tiny little creature and the new parents were painfully shocked by the doctor's words: "I don't think the baby has much chance of survival. There is only a 10 per cent chance that she will survive the night, and even if that happens by some miracle, the probability that she will have future complications is very high." Paralysed with fear, the mother and father listened to the doctor's words as he described to them all the problems the child would face. She would never be able to walk, talk, see. She would be mentally retarded and much more.

Mum, dad and their five-year-old boy had waited so long for that child. Within a few hours, they saw all their dreams and wishes broken forever.

But their troubles were not over, the little one's nervous system was not yet developed. So, any caress, kiss or hug was dangerous, the disconsolate family members could not even convey their love to her, they had to avoid touching her.

All three held of them held hands and prayed, forming a small beating heart in the huge hospital:

"Almighty God, Lord of life, do what we cannot do: take care of little Diana, hold her to your breast, cradle her and make her feel all our love."

Diana was like a vibrant little baby doll and slowly began to improve. Weeks passed and the little one continued to gain weight and become stronger. Finally, when Diana turned two months old, her parents were able to hold her for the first time.

Five years later, Diana had become a serene child who looked towards the future with confidence and a zest for life. There were no signs of physical or mental deficiency, she was a normal child lively and full of curiosity.

But that is not the end of the story.

One warm afternoon, in a park not far from home, while her brother was playing football with friends, Diana was sitting in her mother's arms. As always she was chatting happily when suddenly she fell silent. She tightened her arms as if hugging someone and asked her mum: "Do you smell that?"

Smelling rain in the air, Mum replied: "Yes. It smells like when it's going to rain."

After a while, Diana raised her head and stroking her arms exclaimed: "No, it smells like Him. It smells like when God hugs you tightly."

The mother began to cry hot tears, as the little girl scampered towards her little friends to play with them.

Her daughter's words had confirmed what the woman had known in her heart for a long time. Throughout her time in hospital, as she struggled for life, God had taken care of the little girl, embracing her so often that his perfume had remained imprinted in Diana's memory.

*God's perfume remains in every child. Why are we all in such a hurry to erase it?*