

One Woman's Quest to Share Christ With a Muslim

Eleven of us were taking a three-week class on politics at one of the most prominent universities in the Middle East. It was known to be the place where diplomats, presidents and kings sent their children to school. Our desire was to engage with the future leaders of the Middle East while we attended class there.

Our professor was quite distinguished. She was tenured, she was an author of two books on politics in the Middle East, and she had taught at Princeton and Oxford. It was an honor to be under her tutelage even for such a short time.

To be completely honest, as we headed into this summer, I wondered if our group could really make an impact in a Muslim country in just three weeks. What could possibly happen in such a short amount of time?

I learned that the answer is—a lot.

During the second week of school, we walked to class and found a note on the door informing us that our professor was not able to come to class that day. She had been in a car accident. The note said that she was fine and would be in class the next day.

Sure enough, our professor was in class the next day. She seemed more than a little dazed. She kept holding her stomach, but she taught the class, nonetheless. Afterward, I went up to her with one of the other students and said, "Professor Mohammad, I'm sorry to hear that you were in a car accident. We prayed for you when we heard about it. Are you all right?"

She smiled, nodded and said, "After the accident, the paramedics had a doctor check me out. He said that my baby

will be fine.”

I had no clue what she was talking about at first. Then I realized she was sharing with me that she was pregnant.

I laughed and said, “What? I didn’t even know you were pregnant! I’m so glad to hear the baby is doing okay after that. I will continue to pray for you and your baby. I’ve really enjoyed your class, Professor Mohammad. I’m learning so much!”

Looking at me a bit surprised, she said, “Really? You think I’m a good teacher? But you’re auditing!”

I smiled and said, “Just because I’m auditing doesn’t mean I don’t want to learn. I have learned so much under you.”

I think that since I wasn’t taking the class for a grade, she believed me; I wasn’t kissing up to her.

Pensive for a moment, she looked at me and said, “I’ve lost two other babies. I was afraid I was going to lose this one too.”

I realized she was sharing something extremely personal with me as she embraced me in a firm hug and said, “Thank you for asking.”

All I had done was go up to her after class to ask how she was doing. I shared that I had prayed for her and expressed that I enjoyed her class. Those small steps seemed to open her up to me in ways I hadn’t anticipated or even looked for.

The Letter

That night, like every other night, I was graciously awakened at 3:30 in the morning by the loud call to prayer blaring outside of my bedroom window. Usually, I’d just wake up briefly and then the chanting would lull me back to sleep. This night was different.

I felt impressed in my spirit to pray for my professor, her unborn child and her daughter, whom she had taken to the airport to fly to see her father. As I was praying, the Holy Spirit nudged me to write her a letter.

My first thought was, Is it safe to write her a letter with spiritual undertones? Would she wonder what our group was doing here? Would it blow our cover?

Whether it was safe or not, I knew I was being asked to write it, so I did.

Dear Dr. Mohammad,

Talking to you after class on Monday was very significant to me. One of my highest values is vulnerable communication, and for whatever reason, you chose to be vulnerable with me. It was my most precious, sacred moment so far in this country. Connecting with a person at a heart level about real life, feelings, trials, challenges, fears and failures means the world to me.

I am so glad you shared with me that you are pregnant and that your baby is fine after the accident. I saw you holding your stomach during class and I wondered if you weren't feeling well. I am sure the car accident was scary, especially in light of your previous miscarriages. Though I am not a mother and have not experienced the physical and emotional pain of losing a child, my heart broke for you and the challenges you have had to face.

You are a very successful woman. You have accomplished already so much in your lifetime. I feel privileged to be taking your class at such a significant time in this country's history. You have taught me so much already. However, I also know that you are not just a professor. You are a woman with a life journey, a life story, filled with joys and pain.

I learned after class that you just sent your daughter to America to visit her father there. That must be so hard and

heartbreaking. I am sure there will be a great void in your heart while she is gone.

Last night, the call to prayer graciously woke me up at 3:30 am. Unlike previous nights, where the call to prayer wakes me up only to sing me back to sleep again, I felt drawn to pray for you. I know very little about you, and I have no clue as to what your religious beliefs or practices are. But I felt impressed upon my heart to pray for you, your baby and your daughter heading to America. As I prayed for peace, comfort and safety, a poem came to my mind that is one I treasure. The prophet David wrote it, and it is found in Psalm 139 in the holy Bible.

My theory, as I've traveled around the world, is that we humans have two great desires: to be fully known (all of our good and all of our bad) and still be fully loved. I guess I've become skeptical that this could be found on this side of heaven. I truly believe, though, where man may fail us, God won't. That is why I often cling to this psalm when I wonder, "Why was I born? Does God see me? Know me? Does He care? Does He have a plan for my life?" I have come to believe that He does.

This poem reminds me of that often.

May it, too, bring you encouragement. He formed you. You are fearfully and wonderfully made. His thoughts toward you far outnumber the sand (and there's lots of sand in the Middle East!). May it comfort you to know that your two other babies are with their loving Creator. They are safe in His arms.

Maybe meeting you is the reason I came to the Middle East. Only God knows, but I am glad to have met you, learn from you, and to have gotten a small glimpse into your life.

Prayers and blessings, Holly

The next day after class, I anxiously waited for Professor

Mohammad to come out of the room to hand her the letter. She seemed surprised to receive it, so I told her she could read it later.

The following day she came up to me in the hallway and said, "Thank you so much for your letter. It was the nicest letter I've ever received from a student. It made me cry."

We hugged, and I said, "I'm glad to hear that it blessed you!"

Crisis in Class

It was our last day of class and we were giving final presentations. During one of the students' presentations, Professor Mohammad interrupted her. She wanted the student to change the direction of her presentation because she felt like the student was being too biased toward one point of view.

A fellow student watching the presentation immediately jumped up to defend the other student. Unheard of behavior in this culture, this male student and Professor Mohammad began arguing, heatedly, in each other's face. Finally, the professor told him she would not continue class unless he left. He said he wouldn't leave the room until he had given his presentation. At a standstill, our professor turned around, silently walked to the back of the room and picked up her books. She walked toward the door.

The room was dead quiet. No one moved. As the door closed behind her, I saw her crumple over, as if someone had punched her in the stomach. I got up and ran out the door to her. When she removed her right hand from her black skirt, I saw that it was bloody.

She looked up at me from her hunched-over position and cried out, "I'm losing my baby! I'm losing my baby!"

I was shocked to see the blood. I wasn't sure what to do in that situation. I tried to walk her to the bathroom, but she could barely walk. I partially carried her down the hall.

Two more students came out of the classroom to see what was

happening. Professor Mohammad's demeanor instantly changed. She looked at the three of us and shouted, "Get the f— away! Get the f— away!"

Sobbing, she hobbled into the bathroom alone.

Stunned, the three of us just waited outside, discussing what to do next.

About a minute later, our professor came out. Her hands were clean, but mascara tears stained her face. She shouted, "Back to class. We must finish the presentations."

I had no clue how she would go about concentrating on three more presentations, but we all went back and sat down in our seats to try to re-engage. I couldn't. I just sat there.

I began to pray fervently: Oh, Holy Spirit, please give me wisdom. Should I approach our professor after class? What can I do? Please make me safe so that she'll open up to me. Give me the opportunity to talk to her alone after class. Oh, Holy Spirit, I need wisdom. Help me to know what to do and say. Please, Holy Spirit, open her heart to talk to me. Please.

I just prayed and prayed and prayed and prayed.

Kaitlyn, a girl on our team, gave the last presentation. She spoke about women who have influenced politics in this country over the years. They each had three characteristics in common: They were strong, they persevered and they were persecuted. That was the only part of her presentation I heard. I wrote those words down in my notes and kept praying.

At the end of class, our professor apologized for her behavior with the other student. She said she didn't want to end on that note, so she'd like to have the class over for a party in a few days. Then she picked up her things and started to head out of the classroom. It was the most intense, crazy day we had in class all summer.

After Class

The day wasn't over yet. When Professor Mohammad walked out, I felt this pull on my heart. I knew that I needed to follow her. The worst she could do was keep walking and tell me to "get the f-- away" again. So, I followed her.

She looked back, saw me and slowed down. I walked faster. Down the hallway was a pillar. She walked over to it and stood behind it, seeming to be waiting for me.

As I reached her side, she immediately broke down into heaving sobs and said with fear and trembling, "I'm losing my baby! I'm losing my baby! I was so mean to that kid! I should never have been that mean! I'm losing my baby! I can't do this alone! Why was I so mean? I should lose my job!"

Back and forth, she was trying to process all that happened in the last hour. It was all too overwhelming for her. I suggested I help walk her back to her classroom. Instead, she looked up at me and said, "Will you come home with me? My driver can take you home afterward. I can't do this alone. I can't let my husband know. He doesn't even know that I am pregnant. Please come home with me. Please. I can't do this. I just can't."

All of me wanted to help her, but what was going through my mind was, We aren't allowed to go places alone. It's not safe. I can't go with her. I don't even have a way to talk to my co-leader to make this decision. I said I'd walk her to her car. On the way to the parking lot, she fell against the wall, clearly in a lot of pain. She looked at me and said, "Why do I trust you? Why do I feel like you need to be with me right now? You are just a student."

I must admit, with my Sesame Street T-shirt, cargo capris and flip-flops, I did look like a younger student.

At this point, I had a strong feeling that I should call her by her first name. All of my cultural training went out the

window, because technically, it is more honoring to call her "Professor" since she worked so hard to gain that title. Yet, I couldn't shake the feeling that I was to call her by her first name, Mable.

I took a deep breath, put my hand on her trembling shoulder and said, "Mable, you don't understand. First of all, today was our last day of class, so technically I am no longer your student. Second, I am 34 years old. I'm not your typical college student."

She looked at me in disbelief and said, "No way! You seem like you are only 24! I don't believe it. You can't be!"

I finally convinced her of my age, and we proceeded to walk toward her car.

As we were walking, those three words from the final presentation, describing women who have strived for success in a Muslim culture, came to mind. I looked at Mable and said, "I believe what Kaitlyn shared in class about women needing to be strong, persevering and yet sadly persecuted in this culture is what you seem to have survived to become a professor. I see you as a strong woman. You've written books. You've taught at elite schools all over the Western world. You've persevered through many obstacles to be a successful woman in the Middle East. I am sure you've been persecuted along the way."

She looked at me with her mouth gaping open and said, "How did you know? That's exactly what it's been like for me! Did you know that no one in this school likes me? They probably would all try to get me fired, but I'm tenured, so they can't. I have no friends, no community."

At that point we were at the door to her car. As her driver held open the door, she motioned to me and said, "Get in!" as if she were impatiently waiting for me to join her.

So I took another deep breath, wondering what I was doing, and got in.

And Then It Got Awkward

Being a rule follower, I knew that I was breaking the rules by driving away, alone, with Mable. Yet, I felt that the Holy Spirit wanted me to go with her. She was opening up to me, and for some reason, I knew that this was not normal for her. God was up to something, and I wanted to be a part of it.

Inside the car, I texted my co-leader so that he would at least know where I was going and what was happening. Then I placed my attention back on Mable. I continued to listen as she kept volleying back and forth between the fear of having another miscarriage and the humiliation of how she had treated the student in the class.

After letting her talk it out, I asked, "Mable, can you give yourself grace right now? The young man will be okay. You can revisit the conflict with him in class another day. We just need to get you home and have you focus on taking care of yourself and your baby right now."

As we continued to talk, it was as if something switched inside of her. Her eyes grew wide and round with great anxiety, and she sputtered, "Oh, my goodness! I . . . I think I fancy you! I don't know . . . what to do! I have never felt this way about any man or woman before! It's like I want to jump you right now! Oh, my! I can't be a lesbian! I can't! You need to get out of my car right now!"

I froze in shock as I was trying to comprehend what was happening. I was not ready for her to freak out on me again. I thought we had established some trust in the past hour, but now, apparently, she was feeling emotions she wasn't sure how to handle. I prayed a quick prayer as I looked outside the car window. I knew it wouldn't be safe for me to be dropped off on the side of the road. The streets were filled mainly with men. I had no context to know where I was, and there were no apparent taxis in sight.

Through the Holy Spirit, I calmly looked at Mable and said, "You are not going to drop me off on the side of the road. We are taking you home so that you can rest. If you want your driver to take me home at that point, that's fine, but I'm not leaving this car while you are in this state."

She looked at me in confusion and replied, "But why am I feeling this way? This is freaking me out!"

I looked at her and again spoke calmly. "For the past 45 minutes, I have been engaging with you on a deep emotional level. You shared things with me that your own husband doesn't even know. That trust and vulnerability create what is called emotional intimacy. That is what usually helps women to be attracted to others. In our case, you may have never felt as known or accepted as you have in this past hour. It's a lot to sift through and process."

A noticeable peace settled over her when she heard my explanation. She said, "Holly, you are wise for your years."

Smiling I said, "I just know that people want to be fully known and fully loved—including you. God created the intimacy you are experiencing with me. God was the one that had you open up to me after class the day after your accident. God was the one who woke me up with the call to prayer at 3:30 in the morning to write you a letter. God was the one who blessed you by reading it. God was the one who encouraged you to reach out and ask for my help while you were bleeding outside of our class today. This has all been orchestrated by God."

This seemed to calm her, and soon we arrived at her house.

An Unexpected Phone Call

When I walked into her home, I was amazed at how clean, modern and American her décor was. Eyeing the beautifully painted walls, tiled kitchen, plush living room furniture and hardwood floors, I felt right at home.

She headed to her seven-year-old daughter's bedroom so that she could lie on the bed in an air-conditioned room. I followed her. As she curled up in a fetal position, she motioned to me and said, "Come sit by me."

I just stood there. I wasn't sure if it was wise to sit by her on the bed in her vulnerable emotional state, especially after what she had expressed on the car ride over.

Grasping my hesitancy, she said, "Don't worry. I'm not going to do anything to you. I just need to be comforted."

I'm not the type of girl that likes to cuddle with women, play with their hair or even link arms; but I took another step of faith and sat by her on the bed. She snuggled in. I quickly asked the Lord how to handle this situation. It was clear that I needed to begin to pray for her out loud. I didn't ask her if I could pray for her. I just stated that I was going to pray and dove in.

"Lord, I pray for Mable right now. She's in a lot of pain, and she's afraid. Lord, we pray for her baby right now. Please stop the bleeding and protect her baby. We know from Psalm 139 that You created this baby in a secret place. You have all the days planned for her. Lord, You love Mable. Please show her Your love."

At that moment, Mable started crying and shaking her head, saying, "No! No! God cannot love me! I am not a good person. It's not possible!"

I patted her head. Once again, I felt the role reversal in our relationship, as well as her desperate need for the Lord to reveal Himself to her. I said, "Mable, you are wrong. God does love you. Despite what you've ever done, He loves you. Despite how you see yourself, He sees you differently."

Just then her cell phone rang and she asked me to go get it. When she answered it, it was her husband, Shady. Her demeanor

wasn't getting any happier as they talked. Finally, she said, "Shady, I had a really challenging day in class with one of my students. It was so draining that I am now an emotional wreck. One of my other students came home with me and is here right now. I do not feel well enough to go out tonight . . ."

She put her hand over the phone and whispered to me, "Would you please talk to my husband and explain to him what happened today? But don't tell him that I am having a miscarriage. He doesn't even know that I am pregnant."

Before I could even shake my head no, she handed me the phone. I was talking to Shady, her husband, whom I had never met. His English was practically flawless, and he seemed very caring and nice.

When I tried to think of a diplomatic way to explain the day's events, Shady said, "I am so glad you came home with Mable. It makes me feel so much better knowing that you are with her since I can't be there right now. Would you please stay with her until I come home?"

I said that would be fine and then handed the phone back to Mable.

When she got off of the phone, she explained to me that he was at his business partner's house for a dinner party. He had wanted her to come. She was thankful that I talked to him and that he seemed okay that she wasn't going to join him.

After she'd changed into more comfortable clothes and settled in on the living room couch, her phone rang again. It was Shady. He said that he really did need her to be there. She needed to get dressed immediately and come to this dinner party. She looked so drained, still in pain, but she said she would get ready and join him.

The Blue Dress

When she got off the phone she looked at me and said, "We're

going to a party. Come on. We have to get ready!"

My brain started spinning a mile a minute. I'm not supposed to be alone in this country, and now I am getting invited to a party!

I looked at her and gave her the only meager excuse I could conjure up. "I'm wearing a Sesame Street T-shirt. I don't think I am dressed for a dinner party."

She smiled and gave me a look implying that I was being silly and said, "Holly, I have a whole wardrobe of clothes. I know exactly what you're going to wear tonight too."

Getting up slowly, she walked to her bedroom closet. She pulled out a slinky, light blue, shimmery dress. This is not the sort of dress I would wear in America, let alone in a conservative Muslim country! However, she didn't offer me any other options, so I put it on.

Next thing I knew, she was whisking me out of the house to her car. Her driver was waiting for us, once again. I got into the car and texted my co-leader, Jon, to let him know what I was doing. Each moment of this crazy adventure felt like a risk. I was praying through each step of it, and all I knew was that I needed to stay with my professor. As we started to drive, Mable explained that we weren't just going to any house; we were going to a billionaire's house—the tenth richest man in the nation. Mable's husband was the manager of one of his five companies. No wonder they were so well off.

When we entered the neighborhood, it looked like a version of the mansions in Hollywood; yet this was even grander! We arrived at the mansion and walked over cement lily pads that were surrounded by water to get to the front door. The home was unique, with detailed architecture. The landscaping contained multiple fountains, specially imported trees and lush green grass—all of this in the middle of the desert!

After Mable rang the doorbell twice, a voice spoke through the outside intercom, asking who we were. Mable explained who she was. Then the 10-foot-high copper door opened to reveal the billionaire's wife. Olive-skinned, dyed blonde hair and appearing to be quite anorexic, she extended her bejeweled hand, welcoming us into her home. I thanked her for letting me join my professor for the evening.

The living room in front of us held an infinity pool near the glass wall. You could go swimming in their living room. Everything—paintings, sculptures and furniture—was exquisite. Each item seemed to have been imported from all over the world.

Kissed by a Billionaire

I noticed immediately that there was no one else in the house. The dining room table was set for an intimate dinner, but where were the guests? The billionaire's wife ushered us toward the backyard where there was an outdoor living space of plush couches, pillows and surround-sound TV. I met her husband, Mr. Billionaire, and he kissed me on both cheeks. Apparently, that is the custom in this culture. It was the one time that summer I wished I had Internet so I could put on my Facebook status, "I was just kissed twice by a billionaire!"

Mable introduced me to her husband, Shady. He again thanked me for coming home with her since she'd had such a difficult day.

I looked around and realized that there were only two other men there. As I was introduced, I quickly learned that I was meeting the CEO of a large French car company and his business partner. They were in the country for just two days, specifically to make a deal with Mr. Billionaire about bringing their cars into the country. This was a private dinner party. I was the odd woman out, making the total dinner guests seven.

My head began to swirl with questions. What in the world was I doing there? How did I end up in this situation? How am I to

interact with these elite people?

I usually joke with my friends and say that I prefer not to network in my job, and that small talk is not my cup of tea. I prefer engaging in deeper conversation to really get to know a person. I like to be intentional. That caused me to ponder, Why am I in this crazy, unusual situation?

The only reason I could conjure up was that I was to be a support for my professor. All evening, through hors d'oeuvres, wine, cheese and intriguing (though slightly pointless) conversation, Mable kept coming up to me. She would hug me, say that she loved me and was so thankful I was there with her.

We had the most delicious dinner of my entire summer, with lively conversation about politics in the country. After dessert and coffee, my unusual night came to a close as Mable and Shady accompanied me to my home with their driver.

I learned a few days later that after dropping me off at my home that night, Mable lost her baby. When she told me this in a flat, emotionless voice, she stretched out her fingers and said, "My child was about two inches long."

She started to tear up, finally feeling some emotion, but quickly pushed it away. She couldn't talk about it. She tried to change the subject by mentioning that she wanted to have me over again before I left the country. She wanted me to come over on Saturday night.

I wrestled with whether it was wise to go to her place again, alone. If her husband wasn't home, and I was alone with her, would she try to come on to me? Would I be safe if her driver picked me up and dropped me off at my home alone?

My co-leader, Jon, and I talked it over. We took time to pray about it. Both of us agreed that I might be setting myself up

for an uncomfortable situation if Mable did make any advances. Yet it seemed to be worth the risk if it was my only opportunity to share the gospel with her before I left.

So, in faith and much prayer, I had her driver pick me up and take me to her house.

Talking About Vampires and Other Spiritual Things

As soon as I entered her home, Mable began making us a snack in the kitchen. As I was helping her cut up some vegetables, she said, "You know, I'm not getting any younger. I've been thinking a lot about what will happen when I die. Will I go to heaven? Will there be enough room in heaven for everyone?"

I listened as she listed all of these questions she'd been pondering. I was amazed that she was the one bringing up spiritual issues, not me!

She then said, as if it were a side thought, "Huh. I never asked you what you do for a living!"

I had wondered if this question would ever come up. I was thankful that in the past year I had become a certified life coach. I explained, "I'm currently a life coach, but I would also like to be an author and speaker one day. Do you know what a life coach is?"

"Yes, I do. But in my opinion, the reason people hire a life coach is because the churches and mosques are not doing their jobs."

I couldn't have agreed with her more! I then explained how when I coach people, I use principles found in the Bible because there is practical advice there that can really guide our lives.

Mable then began to share more of her story. Her first husband (with whom she had her daughter) was Jewish. She asked, "What is the difference between Christians and Jews?"

I saw this as an opportunity to explain a little about Jesus.

“Really, the difference between Christians, Jews and even Muslims is their understanding of who Jesus was. Christians believe He was the Messiah that the Jews were waiting for. The Jews weren’t convinced. They thought a Messiah would free them from physical oppression from the Romans, rather than spiritual oppression from sin. Muslims see Jesus as a prophet, which He was. However, He was the only perfect prophet, and that’s significant. He was the only prophet who could adequately die in our place for our sins.”

She looked at me, pondered what I had said, and then asked, “Weren’t all of the prophets perfect?”

I smiled and said, “Nope! You know the prophet David, whom we call King David? Well, he committed adultery and then killed someone. Yet, he confessed his sin, still wanting to walk with God. He was a good man, but not perfect.”

Intently listening, Mable replied, “Oh! I didn’t know that. No one’s ever explained this to me.”

She then asked what I wanted to write about or speak on in the future. I told her that I wanted to write a book called The Vampire Who Changed My Life.

She looked at me, very intrigued, and said, “Really? Do tell! I love horror stories!”

I laughed a little and said, “Well, I don’t know if it’s really a horror story . . . but it certainly has a good ending!”

The next half hour I proceeded to tell her the story of Christy the vampire. I made sure to clearly share the gospel. I explained how Jesus was relevant even to a woman who thought she was a vampire.

Mable hung on my every word.

At the end of the story, she looked at me with big eyes and said, "I have never heard of someone's life changing like that! That was incredible! Holly, I believe God has great purpose for you in this world."

I once again had to laugh inside at how our God works. Who would have thought 13 years after Christy the vampire became a follower of Jesus, I would be able to share her story with a Muslim in the Middle East so that she could hear the gospel. Sometimes God's strategies just make me smile and laugh.

As we stood by her wall of windows, looking out at the city lights, I said, "Mable, there's one thing I believe God does with me. He enables people to trust me who usually have a hard time trusting people. Christy had a very hard time trusting anyone. And you admitted the other day that you, too, have no real friends. You haven't even been able to tell your husband that you were pregnant or had a miscarriage, yet you trusted me. I was a stranger who popped into your life for just three short weeks as a student in your class. You had no reason to trust me. No reason to share with me your life, your pain. No reason to invite me to your house, or to the billionaire's house, for that matter. But you did! I believe that God enables people to trust me so that I can share Jesus with them."

Mable listened and nodded.

I continued, "I truly believe you were the reason I came to the Middle East this summer. God wanted to unite us in the midst of this time of tragedy in your life so that I could befriend you and tell you about Jesus."

Just then the door opened, and Shady walked in. Perfect timing. God's timing, which as always, is perfect.

The Gifts

The three of us hung out for about an hour longer. Mable even asked me to share the "vampire story" with Shady. I felt like

it wasn't the right time, though, and suggested that she share it with him the next day. I learned later that she did.

As we were talking, my phone rang. It was Jon. I hadn't realized how much time had passed—it was already 11:30 at night. It was time for me to say good-bye.

I had brought gifts for Mable but had wanted her to open them without Shady around. That didn't seem possible anymore, so I handed her the gifts and whispered, "Wait until I call you from the car, and then you can open them."

We hugged good-bye. She said she loved me, would miss me tons and their family would plan to come visit me in California someday.

As her chauffeur was driving me away in her car, I called her. I told her to open the bigger gift first. It was a New Testament in both Arabic and English. I encouraged her to read it so that she could learn more about Jesus.

She said thank you and that she would most definitely read it.

Then, I asked her to open the smaller gift. It was a silver ring with four rubies in it. I told her that I had no clue if this ring was going to fit her, but it had a special meaning. "There are four rubies on this ring. From now on, I want you to remember that you are a mom of four children, not a mom of one. Three of your children are in the loving arms of God. One has been entrusted into your loving arms to care for until, I pray, one day we are all united with Jesus in heaven."

Mable was quiet for a moment. Then she said, "Thank you, Holly. This means so much to me. I love you so much."

With tears in my eyes, I told her that we'd keep in contact and that I loved her too.

The clock struck midnight near the end of the phone call. I sat alone in the backseat of her car, and I couldn't help but

believe that God wasn't finished with Professor Mohammad. He didn't bring me to the other side of the world to experience such a crazy situation and not have Him impact her life. Tears started to stream down my face. Thankful for the darkness of the car, I turned on my iPod to listen to worship music the rest of the way home. As I thought about the last few days, I was humbled to grasp that the Lord chose to use me with this person, in this country, for such a time as this.

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