Leroy Ioas was an outstanding Bahai who lived a life of service to others. In 1912 when Abdu’l-Baha visited America, he was a young boy. Can you imagine the excitement of this spiritual child at having the opportunity to be in the presence of Abdu’l-Baha? One day, in Chicago, when he and his father were on their way to the hotel where Abdu’l-Baha was staying, Leroy had an idea: He decided that he wanted to take Abdu’l-Baha some flowers. With the little money he had, he managed to buy a beautiful bouquet of white carnations. But, by the time they reached the hotel, he had changed his mind. He decided that he did not want to give anything MATERIAL to Abdul-Baha, not even beautiful flowers. He would offer Him his heart. That was the most important thing he had to offer. So, Leroy’s father presented the flowers to Abdul-Baha without mentioning who had brought them.

Abdu’l-Baha then gave a talk to all the friend who had gathered at the hotel to meet Him. During His talk, Leroy sat quietly at His feet and listened to His wise and loving words. Afterwards, Abdul-Baha stood up and shook hands with the guests, giving each one a white carnation as a token of His love. Leroy was now standing behind Abdu’l-Baha. “Oh! I wish He would turn around and give me one of those flowers,” thought the young boy. Maybe, secretly in his heart, he wanted the Master to know who had really brought Him the beautiful flowers. But, one by one, the white carnations were being given to other people, and it seemed unlikely that Leroy was going to get one. Then, suddenly , Abdu’l-Baha turned around and fixed His gaze on Leroy Ioas. His face radiated love and His eyes were full of kindness. And did He hand him a white carnation? No. Abdu’l-Baha gave Leroy something even more precious. He was wearing a beautiful red rose on His coat. He pulled it off and presented it to the young boy. Leroy’s heart leaped with joy! Abdul-Baha DID know who had brought Him the white carnations after all!