



Haruko Naomi Ishida

February 19, 1950 - September 1, 2026

Fresno, California

Haruko Naomi Ishida died in Fresno on September 1, 2026. She was seventy-six. Born there on February 19, 1950, to parents who had come home from a wartime camp with a patience the valley did not always return, she grew up in a house that smelled of raisins and coffee and treated both as ordinary. She learned English at school and a second set of manners at the table. She never treated either language as a costume.

She spent twenty-two years on a packing line that turned Thompson seedless into boxes the rest of the country ate without thinking. She was the adult who could sit on a stool without making a production of it. She kept extra socks in a locker for the woman whose morning had already been too long. When a buyer sent a new grade sheet, she translated it twice: once into English a tired crew could use, and once into the quiet that says you are not in trouble for needing help.

She married Daniel Ishida in 1972. They bought a bungalow in a neighborhood that later became expensive around them. They stayed. A son and a daughter went through public schools she trusted more than she trusted real-estate talk. After Daniel died in 2016 she kept the garden of bitter melon and the habit of walking a neighbor's child to the bus when a shift ran late.

Neighbors remember a woman who swept her sidewalk and yours if the wind had been unfair, who kept a coffee can of buttons labeled in two languages, and who could sit through a graduation without making it about herself. She liked the canal early, before the heat, when the trees still looked like a place a person could walk. She died in Fresno, the only city she had ever needed. The extra socks are still in the locker. That would have pleased her more than a eulogy.

Services

A memorial in Fresno with tea afterward. In lieu of flowers, a gift to a packing-house hardship fund or adult English class is welcome.

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