

# Something With Fish

A monologue

Sandra Perlman

A woman must give up her beloved cat in a monologue of loss and love

## CHARACTER

Mrs. Anna Warren

## TIME

Present

## SETTING

Empty stage which serves as a waiting room in a Veterinarian's office

At Rise:

The stage is black. There is the sound of a car driving up, a door opening and closing, a cat meowing, another door opening and closing, then many cats and dogs meowing and barking. Finally, a third door opens and closes as the other sounds fade away. A small spotlight appears in the middle of the stage. MRS. ANNA WARREN stands uncomfortably in the middle of the beam of light. She wears a large faded print dress, anklet socks and worn canvas shoes. A bobby pin holds her hair away from her eyes. There is a Mercurochrome patch on her leg. Her body is wrapped around the bulky blanketed object in her arms.

ANNA

I'll just stand here if you don't mind. Stand here and hold Miss Kitty who's never been away from home in all the years we've had her and that's almost thirteen if you count this week-end which we shouldn't. The Mister and me want to thank you for finding her a new home since everyone we asked wanted a kitten cause they're so cute. The Mister told them they might not end up cute but if you took Miss Kitty you'd know what you were getting right away. And if you feed her good she could be around a long time.

Did you say these people had children, or was it just like the Mister and me who always wanted them? The Mister thought it was because he was so much older, but I read once that a man had a baby when he was nearly ninety-nine and his wife was twenty-two which is even younger than me. I know personally that Kitty would love to have some children to play with. Sometimes it happens like that. You grow up and all you want is a little place to live and some land to plant your own tomatoes, since the ones in the stores taste like old Halloween mustaches. I loved Halloween but if you don't have children people think you're crazy dressing up and hanging black cats in your window. If anyone made fun of your clothes you could just say "This is my Halloween costume, thank you " because Mama made me promise to be polite no matter how nasty those children got to be. One time Mama took my school picture and pasted it on a cardboard playing card she'd drawn so good I looked just like the Queen of Hearts. Everyone called me "Queenie" all day long and I was third runner-up in the costume parade which is the best I ever did at anything. (Pause)

Did you say this couple had a house cause Kitty's used to one room and the bath down the hall so anything more will seem like a palace which she would just love. I can't seem to remember a thing you told me after I said the Mister would be

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA (cont'd)

staying at the hospital permanent.

My father taught me to play cards in the hospital. "Fish" and "war" and that other game you play by yourself. We were visiting Mama who lost her leg from her sugar being so bad. She cried when they told her they were taking it off since she said her only pleasures in life were her Hershey kisses, dancing with my Father at the Legion Hall on Friday nights and having me of course. Kitty loves candy too but it's the treat that taste like chicken or fish which is her favorite. Mama said each of us has a special weakness and God will forgive us if we ask just once. The Mister's weakness is cigarettes which saved his life once in the army when he bent over to light up and a bullet whizzed right by his butt. Guess you only get saved once though. Not like Miss Kitty who must surely have more than nine lives. When I met the Mister he was bigger than me and stronger too. Now I can almost pick him up in my arms. You're sure there's no children at this new house Kitty's going to? I keep forgetting. Daddy said he had to tell me important things five times. Like when he said Mama was dead. I was thirteen and kept falling asleep before he could finish. They wouldn't let me see her or the leg but I cried so hard they finally let me in. There was me and Mama and the light from Jesus beaming right down on her like something from a movie. She looked like a bride in that white gown and Daddy said that was right since she was now the bride of Jesus and all the angels would be at their wedding. He wasn't jealous at all. I thought that was nice till daddy died and then my head hurt wondering if Jesus could marry him too. So I just stopped thinking about heaven till last week when they said the Mister probably wouldn't be coming home again and how I should consider my "options". I keep trying to figure out what they want me to say, but all I can see is the Mister's skin falling off his bones and me alone. That's when I made up my mind I wasn't leaving the Mister again cause I left Daddy in mine shaft 34 and I still dream of him trying to get out. The Mister worked right near Daddy in number 34, but he had a toothache so bad that day they had to pull it. He come as soon as he heard there was an accident and stood right next to me 'til they told us they were shutting it up for good. When the fellow from the news stuck that camera in my face and asked me how I felt being all alone, the Mister said, "Bert's kid don't answer dumb questions" and took me right home. Made me Campbell's tomato soup and a grilled American cheese just like daddy, then put me to sleep in my bed and sat up in the living room chair all night so I wouldn't be lonely. We been together ever since and he always says it's a privilege to be doing things for a woman like me. I believe him too cause he's always been a gentleman in every way and even clips my toenails. You didn't say there were children did you? No, I remember and you won't have to say another word. But would you tell those people Kitty never grabs food from the table and she's a real good mouser which I personally consider a gift. The Mister says maybe Kitty has

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ANNA (cont'd)

been better for us than children since you never know how children will turn out, or if they'll turn on you when you're not looking like his own boy did. I said you can never know what God is sending you, like meeting the Mister the same day I lost Daddy.

(Starting to leave she turns )

I forgot to give you this, which reminds me to tell the people taking Kitty it would be real nice if they gave her a special treat once a week. Not that she's picky 'cause she'll eat whatever you give her. It's a small weakness really to have a treat. Just a little something with fish would be just fine.

END OF PLAY