

THE LAST CATCH

A Short Script

by

Lisa D. Merrill

Lisa D. Merrill
Writer6192003@yahoo.com
619-542-1411
619-252-1831
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FADE IN: ESTABLISHING SHOT OF BLUE AND WHITE BUS POLE SIGN

EXT. CITY STREET - MORNING

ANGELINO GUERRA, mid-70s, of miniature grizzled stature, carrying a large umbrella, shuffles up the street toward the bus stop.

EXT. BUS STOP

A MAN, late 30s, stands just under the covering of the stop. He's engrossed in the classified ads section of the paper.

DIEDRE MEYERS, early 70s, willowy figure, silvery gray hair to her shoulders, high cheekbones, sits upon the bench. She holds a white and black cat in a box on her lap.

Angelino reaches the bus stop. Diedre gives him a warm smile. Startled, the cat ducks down in the box.

ANGELINO
(slight Italian accent)
Hello, young lady.

DIEDRE
Good morning.

ANGELINO
Do you mind if I sit beside you?

DIEDRE
No. Please.

Angelino plops down beside her and leans his umbrella against the seat. He peers into the box.

ANGELINO
Cat.

DIEDRE
Yes.

ANGELINO
Never did like cats much.

DIEDRE
Most men don't. Cats remind them
too much of what they're not.

Angelino stares at her with one eyebrow raised.

ANGELINO
Oh? And why do you have a cat here?

DIEDRE

I'm taking him to the vet. He has Feline AIDS. He needs to get an injection every week to help his immune system.

The man peers over the classified ads, glancing at the cat. He goes back to reading.

ANGELINO

Thin.

DIEDRE

Never used to be. His name is Cow.

ANGELINO

Cow?

She lifts the cat halfway out of the box.

DIEDRE

Look at him. See his markings? Just like a Holstein cow.

Angelino studies the cat.

ANGELINO

AIDS, huh?

DIEDRE

Not exactly like human AIDS, but close. It's the beginning of the end for him, I'm afraid.

(beat)

He's like a child to me. I never had children.

ANGELINO

Ah.

(beat)

I'm Angelino.

DIEDRE

Diedre.

They sit in silence for a moment.

ANGELINO

Your cat would like sardines, no?

DIEDRE

Why. . . I guess he would.

ANGELINO

(proud)

I was top Fisherman here in San Diego. Long time ago. Sardines and tuna. The water here was filled with many, many fish. Now. . .

(shrugs)

. . . not so many.

DIEDRE

(thoughtful)

Not so many fish left in the sea.

(sad smile)

Many things have changed since we were young, Angelino.

ANGELINO

Yes, too many. I do not like.

DIEDRE

But I'm sure you can still catch a fine fish.

Angelino looks at her with renewed interest.

The number 3 bus heads toward the stop.

Diedre closes the cat in the box.

Angelino watches.

She gathers the box up in her arms and stands. Angelino stands too.

The bus pulls up. The doors SWISH open.

The man with the classified ads jaunts up the stairs.

Angelino opens up the umbrella.

ANGELINO

Please. Share my umbrella.

Diedre looks up at the sunny, cloudless sky and then at Angelino.

ANGELINO

(shrugs)

Just in case.

She accepts his invitation and steps under the umbrella. He walks with her to the bus.

Diedre stops at the open doors. He pulls back.

DIEDRE
Aren't you coming?

ANGELINO
(shakes head)
I take the number 5.

DIEDRE
Oh.
(beat)
Then it was nice meeting you,
Angelino.

He nods.

She enters the bus. The doors SLAM closed and the bus roars away in a cloud of exhaust.

Angelino stares after the bus.

BUS STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

Angelino, with his umbrella beside him, and Diedre with the cat in the box, sit at the bus stop. They converse and laugh.

The man with the classified ads peers at the couple over his paper. He smiles, then goes back to reading.

BUST STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

Diedre, Angelino, with his umbrella, and the cat sit at the bus stop. Diedre pulls a book out of a shopping bag and shows it to him. CLOSE ON BOOK: Chicken Soup For the Fisherman's Soul. Angelino thumbs through it. He nods and smiles.

BUS STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

Diedre and the cat sit at the bus stop. The man with the classified ads sits next to her. Diedre and the man converse. Angelino shuffles up with his umbrella. The man looks from Angelino to Diedre. She shrugs coquettishly. Angelino stands his ground.

The man nods resignedly and moves over. Angelino slides in beside Diedre, keeping his back to the man.

Angelino leans his umbrella against the seat, takes a piece of hard candy out of his pocket, and hands it to her. She gives him a glowing smile.

Angelino turns and gives the man a narrowed eye look. The younger man glances away, his smile threatening to become a full-blown laugh.

BUS STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

Diedre and Cow, wait on the bench at the bus stop alone. She appears anxious, looking for. . . Angelino! She smiles as he shuffles up, with his umbrella, and presents her with a cream puff. He pats the cat's head.

BUS STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

The umbrella sits alone at the bus stop as Angelino escorts Diedre to the bus, carrying the box.

Angelino hands her the box. She doesn't seem to want to leave him. She reluctantly mounts the stairs. The bus doors close them off from one another.

Diedre on the bus. She waves to Angelino through the window as the bus leaves the stop. He waves back.

BUS STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

Angelino sits alone at the bus stop, a small bakery box in his lap, umbrella by his side. He smiles to himself and waits.

BUS STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

Angelino stands at the bus stop, leaning on his umbrella. The number 3 bus comes and goes. She's not on it. Disappointment saturates his face.

BUS STOP - DAY - MONTAGE

Angelino shuffles up to the empty bus stop, a bouquet of flowers in one hand, umbrella in the other, eyes searching the area. He eases himself down. He sits and waits.

And waits. . . . And waits. . . .

Finally, he stands and picks up his umbrella. He goes over to a trashcan and stops in front of it. He looks at the bus stop one more time. In surrender, he deposits the bouquet in the trashcan and leaves.

END MONTAGE

EXT. BUS STOP - LATE AFTERNOON

Angelino sits at the bus stop, umbrella next to him. The number 3 bus pulls up. Angelino sits up straighter, hopeful.

The man with the classified ads comes off the bus though no longer toting them. He now wears a company badge, and is dressed better.

The man nods to Angelino and starts to head up the street. Angelino keeps his eyes on him. Suddenly, he stands.

ANGELINO

You! Wait!

The man turns around.

ANGELINO

The woman with the cat. Have you seen her?

MAN

(shakes head)

Not since her cat died.

Angelino steps back in surprise.

MAN

If you're lookin' for her, I know she lives just up the road on Skylar Drive.

(beat)

It's a short street.

The man gives him a smile and walks off. Angelino watches him go, thoughtful.

EXT. SKYLAR DRIVE - DAY

Angelino shuffles up the street. He carries a small box in his hands. He glances left to right as he muddles along.

EXT. DIEDRE'S APARTMENT - PORCH

Diedre lazes on her porch stairs, gazing out at the street, sadness and loneliness apparent in her eyes. She plays with Cow's harness.

Angelino sees her. He brightens and waves. She doesn't notice him. He frowns and goes over to where she sits.

ANGELINO

Hello, Diedre. I have not seen you at the bus stop.

Diedre gives him a blank stare. She doesn't smile.

DIEDRE

I know. My cat's gone now so there
isn't a reason to take the bus any
longer. I. . . .

Diedre lets the sentence fade. She sighs.

Angelino sits down beside her. Suddenly, the box moves. She
stares at it, curious.

DIEDRE

What's in there?

Angelino studies her face for a moment.

ANGELINO

I once knew a woman who carried a
cat in a box. Now you can say you
know a man who does so too.

He opens up the box and a black and white cow kitten pokes
its head out and mewls. It sports a green velvet ribbon
around its neck. Diedre smiles.

DIEDRE

Oh, Angelino! He's beautiful.

ANGELINO

You like him? Then he's yours.

She gasps, and picks the kitten up. She cuddles it and holds
the kitten out in front of her. She squints at the ribbon.
There's something attached to it.

She touches the something. It's a gold and diamond ring. She
turns wide eyes on Angelino.

ANGELINO

I'm a man who knows what I'm not. I
don't need a cat to tell me. And
I'm not anything without you,
Diedre. Will you marry me?

Suddenly, a couple of raindrops fall from the heavens and
land on Angelino's hand. . .and the porch. Angelino looks up
at the sky. He stands. He glances around for his umbrella.

ANGELINO

I'm sorry. I do not have my
umbrella today.

Diedre stands. She holds the kitten close. She goes over and opens the door to her home.

DIEDRE
Come in then, Angelino. And the
answer is. . . yes.

Angelino smiles. He takes her hand and she leads him inside.

FADE TO BLACK:

FADE INTO:

EXT. ANGELINO'S HOME - A FEW MONTHS LATER

Angelino and Diedre share a quiet moment with their getting bigger by the minute cow kitten.

FADE OUT.

CREDITS ROLL

THE END

In memory of my own cow cat, and my dear friend, Mr.
Leslie Davis, June 23, 1966 - April 2, 2005, who always
believed in me.

Take care of each other.