

"I LIKES TO GO FISHING"

Flora Baikie's story, adapted for stage by the Grade Eight Class of Lake Melville High School, North West River, Labrador.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

Singer	-	Carolyn Baikie
Aunt Flo	-	Gail Baikie
Penny	-	Joanna Hughes
Flashback One	-	Greg Matthews Morgan Michelin Deidi Martin
Flashbacks Two & Three	-	Morgan Michelin Yulanda Humby Michelle Sweetland Cora Mucko Gordie Michelin Janice Montague Ian Blake Deidi Martin Everett Chaulk Fred Rich Carolyn Baikie Greg Matthews
Flashback Four	-	Janice Montague Cora Mucko
Flashback Five	-	Carolyn Baikie Fred Rich Everett Chaulk Yulanda Humby Michelle Sweetland Gordie Michelin Ian Blake Deidi Martin

DIRECTOR: JUNE BAIKIE



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BY

FLORA BAIKIE

(Adapted for stage by the Grade Eight Class of Lake Melville High School)

(Flora Baikie, an elderly lady of 89, is seen UR corner under a spotlight in a rocking chair, duffel work in her hands. A voice backstage begins to sing the first verse of "My Mulligan Home" hauntingly, and Flora stops her handiwork to daydream. When the singing is over she concentrates on her needlework again. Suddenly three chimes from the mantelclock are heard.)

Flo: My goodness! Jenny'll be here soon for her lesson. (A knock is heard and Jenny enters.)

Jenny: Good Afternoon, Aunt Flo.

Flo: Hello, Jenny.

(Jenny sits on floor by the rocking chair and takes out her duffel work and begins, with aunt Flo pointing out a few small things)

Flo: You know, that design you're doin' there was showed to me by my Grandmother Campbell.

Jenny: Wow, it must be an old design.

Flo: It was showed to her by her mother who was a full-blooded Eskimo.

Jenny: But her name was Campbell, you said. That's not an Eskimo name.

Flo: Well, I'll tell you how it all came about, and I guess, how three quarters of the people living in Northwest River came about. It was a long time ago, around 1806 I believe. My great grandfather, Ambrose Brooks, came over from England to fish and trap for his living. Well, he was salmon fishing with a friend of his at Pearl River one day, figuring they were miles away from the next person, when suddenly a very young Eskimo girl appeared in front of them.....

(Scene II - Ambrose Brooks and a friend are hauling in their nets. Ambrose looks up from the nets as he hears someone calling, and then sees Susan, an Eskimo girl, waving to them).

Susan: Kaigitse.

Ambrose: What is a child like you doing way out here all alone?

Susan: Ananaga, atatagolo tokusimsjut. Tigujaulaukunga kalunanuk. Ikua kalunat anikusimevanga. Iilukangilanga.

Friend: She says her mother and father are dead and that the people who took her in told her to get out because she was bringing them bad luck. Now she has no place to live.

Ambrose: Well, come with me, little one, and I'll take you up to Northwest River where a nice couple I know at the trading post will take care of you.

Aunt Flo: Ambrose Brooks did take her to the Hudson's Bay post in Northwest River and she was cared for very well by the couple living there at that time. They taught her English, and a few years later, Ambrose came back for her and married her. My Grandmother Campbell was one of their children. She married a trapper who came from Scotland.

Jenny: What a lovely story! I'm so glad Ambrose came back and married her. What were weddings like in them days?

Aunt Flo: Well, I don't quite know what type of ceremony it was for my great grandparents, but I'll tell you what it was like when I got married. Yes, I remember it as if it were yesterday, though it happened almost 70 year ago. He and my intended, Freeman Bikkie, had to row down the river to Kullisuk because that's as far as the minister was going to come up. Everyone from the area got together at Aunt Zack's house for the wedding ceremony.

Scene III

(All enter living room, removing their outdoor clothing, and greeting each other)

Uncle Joe: This is going to be a great wedding. Where's the honeymoon kept?

Aunt Hannah: The ceremony hasn't even started yet, Joe.

Aunt Mary: Joe doesn't think of anything else but drinking bonobrow.

Aunt Hannah: Come on, Aunt Mary. My Joe thinks of lots of other things.

Aunt Mary: Like what?

Aunt Hannah: Well, eh-- You tell 'em, Joe. You think of lots of things, don't you?

Uncle Joe: Yeh! I think about ----- that pretty girl that works at the trading post.

Aunt Hannah: Why, Joe. You said I was the only girl you ever took any notice of.

Aunt Beck: Here comes the preacher. Go tell Flo, Henry, and fetch Freeman.

(Organ music on tape - Here Comes The Bride)

(All in position. Lights off and on. Ceremony has ended.)

Preacher: I now pronounce you man and wife.

(Everyone chats in a friendly way to each other and congratulates Flora and Freeman. Several shotgun blasts are heard (tape) as the people leave)

(During this scene a little boy behind his mother throws a spitball at a little girl who is shyly hiding behind his mother. She cries and boys mother spanks his behind.)

Aunt Flo: After the wedding ceremony, everyone climbed aboard their boats and roved three miles to Cul de Sac where we were going to have a dance in one of the old houses my grandparents lived in years ago.

Scene IV-

Crowd enters in a happy noisy atmosphere. Several men go to the homebrew jug. Women chat among themselves. Fiddler starts to play.

Uncle Joe: Come on, Harriet. Your rheumatic ain't bothering you tonight. Come on and stop her down with us.

Aunt Hannah: All right, Joe. If you're sure I's the only girl you ever took notice of.

Freeman: Awful strong homebrew you got here, Dan. What did you put in it?

Dan: Used no special berries from no special dog-berry tree.

Flora: Come on, Freeman. Let's dance.

Henry: Come on, Aunt Beck. Let's show these youngsters how to dance.

Aunt Beck: Well, I'm not as young and spry as I used to be, but I'll try.

(Dancing and then scene ends) During this scene the little boy can be seen chasing the little girl.

Aunt Flo: Them dances were really enjoyable You don't hardly hear tell of them no more.

Jerry: You must have had a lot of fun in those days.
 Aunt Flo: We had some fun, but there was a lot of hard work too.
 Jerry: I bet you didn't have to go to school every day like we do.
 Aunt Flo: I didn't get much schoolin', but what I did get was taught to me by my Grandmother Campbell. She'd teach me my letters and to read a bit.

Scene 5

(Grandmother Campbell and young Flo are at a table with a lighted candle. There is an open book in front of them.)

Flo: Tom and Dick ran.....ran.....

Grandmother: Run....

Flo: Run down.....

Grandmother: The hill.....

Flo: (proudly) Tom and Dick ran down the hill.

Grandmother: That's better, Flo. Now how do you figure it?

Flo: Oh, Grandmother.

Grandmother: What's 1 plus 1?

Flo: Two.

Grandmother: No, not down.

Flo (chinking hard): Three!

Grandmother: Good. Now try 2 plus 1.

Flo: Two or four.

Grandmother: Very good. That's enough for now. It's been a long and busy day. Kiss Grandmother goodnight now.

(Flo gets up, kisses her goodnight and leaves. Grandmother smiles happily, picks up the lighted candle, looks around the room, and exits.)

Jenny: Do you mean you didn't have regular teachers when you were a little girl?

Flo: That's true. But when I had my own children, they was taught by proper teachers who used to come from Nfld. They're job would be to go around to all the places like Sable, the Islands, Mud Lake, Grand Lake, Mulligan - places wehre there was a few families living. They'd stay about two weeks in each place. Twas some hard for the kids to settle down around the kitchen table for some schooling when they was used to being so active. I remember once when we was living at the Islands, the teacher was their own cousin, Mae Baikie, she was then. School was held at Uncle Bob's house:

(Scene - Children are holding hands and moving in a circle singing:

King William was King George's son
And from the royal race he sprung.
On his breast he wore a star
Pointing to the governor far.

Teacher, Mae Baikie comes in and children stop singing and hurry to sit in their chairs around the kitchen table. One of the children retrieve his slate which is upside-down on the teacher's chair. Teacher sits on chair. When she stands up she is the object of some giggling because there is chalk dust on her skirt. She clears her throat and the children stand up by their chairs.)

Teacher: Good morning. I'm going to be your teacher for the next two weeks. So you must all call me Miss Baikie and Not Mae. Sit down and put your slates on the table.

Children do so. At that moment Earl, a little boy, enters the room and shyly tugs on the teachers' skirt. She looks hard at him.)

What are you doing here, Earl?

Earl: I wanna learn too.

Teacher: But you're too little.

Earl: I am not too little, I'm almost as big as you. (Rises up on toes)

Teacher: You may look big enough, but you are too young. Go home, Your mother will be worried about you.

Earl: My mother said I could come. So there! (Pouts)

Maud: She did not. That's fibbing, Earl. (Earl starts to cry).

Teacher: Alright. Just for this morning. Go and sit by your cousin Ella.

Ella: I don't want him sitting by me because he drools.

Teacher: Sit down, Ella, and put up with it for now. (Harold has his feet on the table) Take your feet off the table, Harold (Strikes his feet with her cane. Harold immediately puts his feet down) Now let's practice some figuring. What is four plus three..... Tom?

Tom: Don't ask me, Miss. I only know the hard stuff.

Maud: Four plus three is seven.

Teacher: Very good, Maud.

Tom: See, Miss. Maud knows all the easy stuff but no hard stuff. (Maud sticks tongue out at Tom. Earl pulls Maud's hair and she screams)

Teacher: Earl, you either go home or stand in the corner until I have time to deal with you. (Earl dejectedly goes in corner)

Warren: Miss, I can't do this sum.

Teacher: Very Well, Warren. Everyone get to work. (They all bend over the table working. When teacher's back is turned, Earl sneaks out)

Jenny: It's all so interesting. Sometimes I wish I was living back then. (Both put away their handiwork and prepare to go outdoors. Aunt Flo is seen pulling woollen socks over her snowboots.) What are you pulling socks over your boots for, Aunt Flo?

Aunt Flo: Yesterday, when I was out fishing on the ice just off from the house, it was so slippery that I had to crawl ashore on my hands and knees. I figure I'm too old for crawling so today I'm wearing wool socks so I don't slip. Even though I'm 80 years old, I still like to go fishing, you know. (Takes her fish hook and both exit.)