

## **Modified from the Monologues:**

### **Anna**

by Anne E. Curtis

and

### **Anna and the King of I AM**

by Curt Cloninger

**Reader:**

**There she sat, in the courtyard.**

**Anna, old and gaunt. Skin, leather on bone. Eyes, milky with years. Barely able to remember her marriage, years ago, or the wounds of the early widowed.**

**Anna.**

**A picture of the powerless. A scarcely living reminder of all she was NOT. And yet, there she sat, looking only forward, living only from Now. Some days she prayed, with eyes opened, dimly scanning the crowds for some Embodied Promise.**

**Some days she prayed, eyes closed, with spirit focused even more clearly on some unclaimed Sliver of Hope.**

**The younger ones, who still mistakenly clung to some illusion of control, queried her daily, “How would she know when Hope and Promise arrived? Would the Sliver be too ethereal to grasp?**

**But, Anna had no answers; only prayers, in the Now.**

**And for years and years she focused her cloudy eyes on the Yet to Be.**

**And then, one day, in the Now, Hope appeared, And not too ethereal to grasp. In the courtyard, where she was. An Embodied Promise. A baby. Flesh and (tiny) bone. A baby. And Hope had a name: I AM.**

**In the Now A King, who whispers to the Powerless. " I A M ".  
In the present A King, who promises with Life and Limb:  
" I A M ".**

**In the moment "Anna and the King of I AM"**

**A King, who by the very audacity of His presence says, to the old woman: "Anna. Friend...weak and gaunt. Powerless One. You are not. But, I A M ."**

I thought I heard something going on in here. I hope you don't mind if I join you. I am Anna, daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of Asher. And You -- must be visitors. I don't think I've seen you here before. And, I should know, I am always here. I've been coming to the temple to pray longer than many of you have been alive!

Let's see, it's over 60 years now, since my husband died. We had 7 years together. But after he died, I began coming here. And This is where I've been ever since.

My friends used to say to me, "Anna, why don't you go with us to the market?" "Anna, why don't you visit your relatives in Galilee.?" You'd have a nice time..

OR

My favorite, "Anna, why don't you remarry a nice Jewish man?" But by now - they know I will NOT!

And, by now my friends have gone on in their lives without me. I do get to see them in here from time to time though.

They still do not understand how I can spend all my life praying and fasting here in the Temple. I understand where they are because I've

been there, but they do not understand me.  
I asked them once 'What is out there, that is greater than what is in here.' They could not answer.

Now, if that King David were alive, he would understand me. When I think of all the Beautiful Psalms he wrote about longing for the presence of God, about seeking the Lord day and night, I am brought to mind his words ...

**Reader:**

**One thing I ask from the Lord,  
this only do I seek:  
that I may dwell in the house of the Lord  
all the days of my life,  
to gaze on the beauty of the Lord  
and to seek him in his temple.**

Oh, David, if you only knew, I am doing just that and it is more marvelous than I ever imagined.

I've tried to explain myself to my friends but they don't get it. Let me see if I can explain it to you.

You see, I am compelled by my heart to seek the Lord's Presence; compelled, by my desire for God. I can do nothing else. Only His Presence satisfies my heart and soul.

**Reader:**

**O my Strength I watch for you; you, O God  
You are my fortress, my loving God.**

To think, the One who created the heavens and the earth - spoke them into being - is willing to let me speak to him. To hear from Him.

Ask of him. And in return, I am filled with wonderful things. Things you can't find at the market.

I am filled with joy. I am filled with a great peace and a purpose.

When the Spirit of God comes upon me, everything in the world seems of no consequence. All that remains is the God himself.

This is how so many years can go by without regretting how I have spent them. And I have not regretted a single day. In my heart and mind, I always draw near to the Lord. Perhaps you can relate to this.

MORE THAN ANYTHING I KNOW  
MORE THAN ANY PLACE I COULD GO  
I WANT TO BE WITH YOU  
I WANT TO BE WITH YOU  
I WANT TO BE WITH YOU  
MORE THAN ANYTHING

Oh yes, my friends feel I am missing out - but it is the other way around.

I have also stayed here so very long because I am compelled by the desperate needs of my people. Growing up, I have seen and experienced living under the oppression of an enemy. The harshness of men who do not fear God. Oh they have lots of gods, which is to say they have none at all! For they do not know the ONE true God. But, I tell you this, it is time for our deliverance. I am sure of it. Because one day, something happened, right here that makes me sure.

**Reader:**

**And there was a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was advanced in years, having lived with her husband seven years from when she was a virgin, and then as a widow until she was eighty-four.[b] She did not depart from the temple, worshiping with fasting and prayer night and day. And coming up at that very hour she began to give thanks to God**

**and to speak of him to all who were waiting for the redemption of Jerusalem.**

**And when they had performed everything according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom. And the favor of God was upon him.**

I was walking through the temple, praying, as is my custom, when I saw Simeon praying with a young couple, right over there. That's not unusual. But, I looked again. Who is that with Simeon? I didn't recognize the man or the woman. But something was happening and I recognized it as the stirring of the Spirit of the Lord.

As I moved closer to them - the Spirit of the Lord came upon me and I KNEW, I knew. There - in the arms of that young mother was the future of Israel.

I heard some of what Simeon was saying: 'The rise and fall of many in Israel. . .'

'A sign to be spoken against. . .'

'Many hearts to be judged...'

As Simeon finished speaking, I became overwhelmed with emotion and the Presence of the Spirit.

My lips gave way to the power of God and I prophesied about the child and about our people.

Wonderful words

Powerful promises

Mysterious things

Scriptures came to my mind from the Prophet Isaiah:

**Reader:**

**“Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen one in whom I delight;**

**I will put my Spirit on him,  
and he will bring justice to the nations.  
He will not shout or cry out,  
or raise his voice in the streets.  
A bruised reed he will not break,  
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.  
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;  
he will not falter or be discouraged  
till he establishes justice on earth.  
In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”**

Did the parents hear? Did they understand? Did I understand?  
NO. NO. Who can fully grasp the plans of the Almighty? His  
understanding no one can fathom.

Overcome by the impact of the revelation, I ran to those praying and  
said, 'Stand to your feet. Lift up your heads! Your answer is here!

One man said to me, "Silly woman, you do not even know what I was  
asking. How can my answer be here."

I responded, "It doesn't matter what the question. Your answer is  
here. There is a child; pay attention to him." And I gathered some to  
show them the child.

We came back and . . .they had gone.

I frantically searched the crowd, trying to see where the family was.  
How could this be? I wanted to run out of the temple! But even if I did I  
would not be able to catch up to them. I am too old. Those who had  
come with me drifted away.

I know, that I belong here - in the Temple. So, I have decided to be  
content to watch and listen for news of this child. Surely such a great  
anointing will not go unnoticed. I am sure to hear of him.

How will he show himself to our people? How will he throw off our  
enemies? How will he take the throne?

And now, I tell those who come here just what I have told you. God has sent a deliverer for us. Our deliverer has come.

OUR DELIVERER HAS COME  
THE HOPE AND GLORY OF ISRAEL.  
BLESSED IS HE.  
BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD.

He is here, and nothing will be the same.  
Not me. Not my people. Not the nations. Shalom.