

On Golden Pond - Chelsea and Ethel

ETHEL

How'd you get here?

CHELSEA

I rented a car. A Terrain. It's made by GMC.
(she and Ethel embrace)

ETHEL

You're not supposed to come till the fifteenth.

CHELSEA

Today's the fifteenth.

ETHEL

No!

CHELSEA

'Fraid so.

ETHEL

Well. No wonder you're here.

CHELSEA

Still have the kid or did you drown him?

ETHEL

Still have him.

CHELSEA

Are he and Norman asleep?

ETHEL

You must be joking. They're out on the lake already,
antagonizing the fish. Still have Bill or did you drown him?

CHELSEA

Still got him. But he's not with me. He went back to the
coast. He had a mouth that needed looking into.

ETHEL

Oh. You must have left Boston at the crack of dawn.

CHELSEA

I left Boston in the middle of the night. I felt like

driving. I didn't feel like getting lost, but it worked out that way.

ETHEL

If you'd come more often, you wouldn't get lost.

CHELSEA

You're right. If I promise to come more often will you give me a cup of coffee?

ETHEL

All right. I could do that. Yes. You must have had a lovely time in Europe. You look fabulous.

(she exits)

CHELSEA

I do? I did. I had a lovely time.

(she peers out at the lake)

ETHEL

(offstage)

I always thought Norman and I should travel, but we never got to it somehow. See the boys?

CHELSEA

Yes. What are they doing out there? It's starting to rain.

ETHEL

(returning with coffee cups)

Ah, well. I told Norman not to go. The loons have been calling for it.

CHELSEA

Look at you. You've had that robe for as long as I can remember.

ETHEL

It looks that way, doesn't it?

CHELSEA

It looks ... magical.

(she hugs her emphatically,
Ethel steps back, embarrassed)

ETHEL

You're in a huggy mood today. What's the matter?

CHELSEA
You seem different.

ETHEL
You mean old.

CHELSEA
I don't know.

ETHEL
Well, that's what happens if you live long enough. You end up being old. It's one of the disadvantages of a long life. I still prefer it to the alternative. Come sit down. You must be exhausted.
(Ethel sits. Chelsea wanders)

CHELSEA
Have Billy and Norman gotten along all right?

ETHEL
Billy is the happiest thing that's happened to Norman since Kennedy. I should have rented him a thirteen-year-old boy years ago.

CHELSEA
You could have traded me in. Billy reminds me of myself out there, way back when. Except I think he makes a better son than I did.

ETHEL
Well, you made an ideal daughter. We couldn't have asked for more.
(Chelsea absorbs that, not satisfied. She ranges on)

CHELSEA
Does Billy put the worm on the hook by himself?

ETHEL
I'm not really sure.

CHELSEA
I hope so. You lose points if you throw up. I remember that. I always apologized to the worms before I impaled them. Well, they'll get even with me someday, won't they?

ETHEL

You're beginning to sound an awful lot like your father.

CHELSEA

Uh oh. Thank you for taking care of Billy.

ETHEL

Thank you. I'm thrilled that it gives us another chance to see you. Plus, it's been a tremendous education. Norman's vocabulary will never be the same.

CHELSEA

(picking up a picture)

Look at this: Chelsea on the swim team. That was a legendary exercise in humiliation.

ETHEL

Oh, stop it. You were a good diver.

CHELSEA

I wasn't a good diver. I was a good sport. I could never do a damn back flip.

ETHEL

Well, we were proud of you for trying.