

On Golden Pond - Bill and Norman

BILL

Um. How does it feel to turn eighty?

NORMAN

It feels twice as bad as it did turning forty.

BILL

Oh, well, I know what that's like.

NORMAN

Do you?

BILL

Yes. I turned forty five years ago. I'm forty-five now.

(realizing how stupid that sounded, he forges on)

I ... love your house.

NORMAN

It's not for sale.

BILL

Oh, no. I wasn't thinking about buying it. I just like it.

NORMAN

Oh. Me, too.

BILL

It has a charming ambiance.

NORMAN

Does it?

BILL

Yes. Norman?

NORMAN

Yes?

BILL

May I call you Norman?

NORMAN

I believe you just did.

BILL

I don't want to press.

NORMAN

No.

BILL

I'll call you Norman then.

NORMAN

Fine.

BILL

What shall I call your wife?

NORMAN

How about Ethel? That's her name. Ethel Thayer. Thoundth ath if I'm lithping, doethn't it? Ethel Thayer. It almost kept her from marrying me. She wanted me to change my last name to hers.

BILL

What was that?

NORMAN

I don't remember. Ethel's all you need to know. That's the name she goes by.

BILL

I never knew. Chelsea always calls her Mommy.

NORMAN

There's a reason for that.

BILL

But she calls you Norman.

NORMAN

There's a reason for that, too. I am her father, if you're trying to figure it out. I'm her father but not her daddy. Ethel is her mommy, and I'm Norman.

BILL

Oh. Is it all right if I sit down?

NORMAN

As far as I'm concerned it is.

(Bill sits. Norman rises)

NORMAN

I think I'll start a new book. See if I can finish it before I'm finished myself. Maybe a novelette.

(he steps to the shelves)

Maybe something in Reader's Digest Condensed. Here's "Swiss Family Robinson." Ever read it?

BILL

Oh, yes. It's first-rate. I'd recommend it.

NORMAN

No need for that. I've read it, too. But my mind's going so it'll all be new to me. Has that son of yours read this book?

BILL

I ... don't think so.

NORMAN

Your son hasn't read "Swiss Family Robinson?"

BILL

No. But I intend to have him read it. I'm afraid his mother's been the motivating force in his life the last few years, the poor kid, and now I'm making a move to eradicate some of the ... dishevelment.

(Norman stares at him. He sits and starts to read)

BILL

Yeah, things are coming together for me pretty smoothly now. The practice is real strong, and I'm feeling very positive about myself. Meeting Chelsea has been a major ... thing. And she's really flowering. She likes her job a lot, and she's been doing some exquisite paintings. We have a very kinetic relationship. Very proactive. I'm sure you'd be pleased.

(he stops. Norman studies him)

NORMAN

What do you charge for a filling?

BILL

Huh?

NORMAN

You're a dentist. What do you charge for a filling?

BILL

Um. Start at about a hundred and forty dollars.

NORMAN

[A hundred and forty dollars]? Good God! My brother charged [35] dollars a filling right up until [1988] when he raised it to [40]. That's when I stopped going to him.