

ON GOLDEN POND

FADE IN:

- 1 AERIAL SHOT - DAY 1
- FROM HIGH ABOVE, we SEE rural New England, all green and gray, laced with black and brown winding roads and blue rivers, and blue ponds, little drab towns highlighted with the inevitable white church. *
- 2 AND THEN THE LAKE - DAY 2
- Golden Pond, shimmering like a sapphire against the deep green forest.
- 3 EXT. ROAD - DAY 3
- A late-model Buick, modest color and style, cruises along this country highway. It passes a small farm where a farmer is erecting a new section of fence.
- 4 EXT. ROAD - DAY 4
- A signpost with a charming collection of information, pointing out the direction to Golden Pond, as well as other points of interest. The Buick turns off the highway onto a smaller tar road.
- 5 EXT. HILL - DAY 5
- An open meadow, ablaze with wild flowers, blueberry bushes just budding. The Buick stops at the meadow's edge. We SEE the lake shining down below.
- 6 INT. CAR - DAY 6
- ETHEL THAYER is at the wheel. She is sixty-nine, full of life and energy, feisty. Beside her is NORMAN THAYER, JR., seventy-nine, gray and faded. He stares out the car window without emotion, but Ethel is aglow with enthusiasm and excitement. She looks at Norman and smiles. The car moves on.
- 7 EXT. VILLAGE - DAY 7
- A cluster of ancient houses, a gas station, where a teenaged boy is carefully painting the single pump. The Buick drives slowly by.

- 17 EXT. ESTATE - DAY 17
 A sprawling place, with tennis courts and manicured lawns. Several men are working, pruning trees.
- 18 EXT. CAMP KOCHAKIYI - DAY 18
 Little cabins and dining hall. Float and docks on the beach, boats and canoes being painted.
- 19 EXT. COTTAGES - DAY 19
 The originals, some boarded up now, others in various stages of ready: docks in place, an occasional boat.
- 20 EXT. THAYER HOUSE - DAY 20
 A wonderful rustic place, two stories high, rambling porch, a widow's watch. On the bank are piled sections of a dock, and a float with a diving board. The yard is covered with pine needles. The board storm doors have been taken off the front of the house and now lean on the porch. There's an old washtub in the back, full of dirt, where later flowers will grow.
- The Buick pulls into the yard. Ethel jumps out, Norman follows slowly. Ethel dashes round the side of the house down to the dock, making Loon calls. From the distance the Loons answer. Ethel turns to Norman who stands at the side of the house watching bemused.
- ETHEL
- Norman. The Loons. They heard me!
 Hello Golden Pond. We're here.
- Norman fumbles with keys, and opens the door. Ethel follows.
- 21 INT. HOUSE - DAY 21
 Norman and Ethel step into the living room.
- It is large, high-ceilinged, comfortable-looking. There's a cheery glow from the lake, which can be SEEN THROUGH the large WINDOWS. The room is practically alive with character and history. Its furniture, eclectic and interesting, is mostly hidden now by dust covers, and there are porch chairs and tables piled up inside as well.
- On the walls we SEE an amazing chronicle of a family. Hundreds of photographs, diplomas and 4-H ribbons, and drawings, and yellowed newspaper clippings.

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED:

21

The whole room, indeed, as we'll see, the whole house, is a huge album of memories. There are old fishing hats on a rack, and old jackets, fishpoles, boat cushions, anchors, a water ski, knicknacks galore, pine cones, stuffed fish, and the like, and hundreds of wonderful books, collections of Dumas and Twain and Dickens and Defoe and Stevenson and other masters of the ilk.

ETHEL

Just look at this place.

NORMAN

It's a mess, isn't it?

ETHEL

Just take a minute. Be all shipshape again.

She pulls off her jacket, puts on a marvelous, dilapidated old thing and steps outside. Norman studies the room, seemingly confused, as though staring at an old friend he can't quite place. He wanders to the fishpoles.

On the wall is a photo of Norman as a younger man holding two large fish. Norman stares at the picture. Beside it is a clipping whose headline reads, "Professor Thayer Retires." It is dated 1966.

NORMAN

Huh.

Norman wanders across the room. We SEE an aluminum canoe near the porch door, the name "Gertrude" emblazed on its bow. *

Norman opens the wooden front door. He pushes the screen door, but instead of swinging open, it falls over onto the porch. Norman regards it for a moment, then steps back into the living room. *

He looks about. He lifts a dust cover and finds a fifties-style telephone on a small table. He lifts the receiver and listens.

NORMAN

(continuing; calling)

The phone works!

(to himself)

At least I think it does.

(he dials "0")

Hello? Hello? Hello?

(CONTINUED)

21 CONTINUED: (2)

21

He is distracted by a photo of himself and Ethel when they were both much younger.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Who the hell is that?

(he calls)

Who the hell is in this picture here?

No answer.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Who the hell is that? Hello? Who is this?... The operator! What do you want?... You called, you must want something... Oh, wait a minute. I did call you, but you never answered... Well... How are you?... How nice. Listen. This is Norman Thayer, Jr. over on Golden Pond, and I have something I'd like you to do. Call me up. Can you do that?... I want to check my phone and make certain it still rings. It hasn't been rung all winter, and it may have lost its whatsis. Do you have my number?... I have no idea, it has a nine in it, that's all I know... Well, it's in the book, you must have a book... Norman Thayer, Jr. Let's give it a try, shall we?

Norman hangs up. He stares at the phone expectantly. A moment passes. He squints at the photo.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Who the hell is that?

We HEAR a KNOCK at the DOOR. Norman is startled. He calls to the kitchen.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Someone's at the door!

22 EXT. BACK STOOP - DAY

22

Ethel stands on the step, arms full of logs.

(CONTINUED)

22

CONTINUED:

22

ETHEL

It's me, you old poop. *

She waits impatiently until at last Norman opens the door.

NORMAN

Well, look at you.

ETHEL

Yes, quite a sight, aren't I?

23

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

23

Ethel marches in, Norman follows. He watches while she dumps her load of logs, and straightens up a bit.

ETHEL

Norman, it's so beautiful.
Everything's just waking up.
Little tiny birds, little tiny
leaves. I saw a whole patch of
little tiny flowers out by the old
cellar hole. I forgot what they're
called, little tiny yellow things.

NORMAN

What were you doing out there in
the woods?

ETHEL

Getting firewood, what do you think
I was doing? What happened to
the screen door?

NORMAN

It fell over.

ETHEL

How?

NORMAN

I pushed it.

ETHEL

What do you mean?

NORMAN

I pushed the door and the door
fell over.

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL

It's not supposed to do that when you push it.

NORMAN

I didn't think so. I'll fix it later.

ETHEL

You might have closed the big door. Now we'll be swatting black flies for the next two days.

*
*

She swings it shut. Norman takes a hat off the rack and puts it on. He studies himself in the mirror.

NORMAN

How do you like this hat?

ETHEL

Stunning. Do you want to help me with the dust covers?

NORMAN

I don't have anything else to do.

She pulls the sheet off the sofa. He reluctantly removes a cover from a chair and begins to fold it carefully.

ETHEL

I met a very nice couple.

NORMAN

What?... Where?

ETHEL

In the woods.

NORMAN

A couple of people.

ETHEL

No. A couple of antelope. Of course a couple of people. Migliore was their name, I believe.

*

NORMAN

Migliore? What sort of name is that.

*

ETHEL

I don't know, dear. Italian, probably. They're up from Boston.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (2)

23

NORMAN

Middle age means the middle, Ethel, the middle of life. People don't live to be 150.

ETHEL

We're at the far edge of middle age, that's all.

NORMAN

We're not, you know. We're not middle aged. You're old, and I'm ancient.

ETHEL

(approaching
irritated)

Oh, pooh, you're in your seventies, and I'm in my sixties.

NORMAN

Just barely on both counts.

ETHEL

Are we going to spend the afternoon quibbling about this?

NORMAN

We can if you like.

ETHEL

The Migliore's whatever their age group, have invited us to dinner, sometime. Wouldn't that be nice? *

NORMAN

I don't know. I'm not sure my stomach is ready for rigatoni and that sort of thing.

She scowls at him. She carries an old handmade table up to the front door.

NORMAN

(continuing)

How's that table? A bit heavy?

ETHEL

Lord, yes. My father built this table in 1917. The first summer I went to Camp Koochakiyi.

(CONTINUED)

Norman tries on another hat.

NORMAN

What do you think of this one?

ETHEL

Quite a sight. Oh, no, poor Elmer has had a terrible fall.

NORMAN

Who's poor Elmer?

ETHEL

Elmer, my dolly. He fell into the fireplace.

NORMAN

Well, he should be more careful.

ETHEL

Poor little Elmer. The life you've had. Did you know he turned sixty-five this spring?

*
*

NORMAN

No, I must say I wasn't aware of that.

He tries on more hats, one of which he'll wear for the rest of the scene.

ETHEL

My father got him for me on my fourth birthday. I wanted a red scooter, but my father said red scooters were excessive and contrary to the ways of the Lord. He told me I'd understand when I got older. Well, I'm a lot older now and I'm afraid I still don't understand. But he gave me Elmer. And Elmer and I, the times we've had. He was my first true love, you know.

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*
*

NORMAN

I've known all along I wasn't the first in line.

ETHEL

No, you were a rather cheap substitute for my darling Elmer. And now he's had a fall, poor dear.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

Maybe he was trying to kill himself.
Maybe he wants to be cremated.
Probably got cancer or termites
or something.

ETHEL

Are you hungry, darling? *

NORMAN

No. It wouldn't be a bad way to go,
huh? A quick front flip off the
mantel, a bit of a kick at the
last minute, and end up right in
the fire. Nothing to it. *

ETHEL

Shut up, Norman! *

NORMAN

When my number's up, do that for
me, would you? Prop me up on the
mantel and point out which way is
down. I may even try for a full
gainer with a half twist. *

ETHEL

Norman Thayer, will you shut up?
Your fascination with dying is
beginning to frazzle my good humor.

NORMAN

It's not a fascination. It just
crosses my mind now and then.

ETHEL

Every five minutes. Don't you have
anything else to think about? *

NORMAN

Nothing quite as interesting. *

ETHEL

Well, what's stopping you? Why
don't you take your dive and get
it over with? See what it's like? *

NORMAN

And leave you alone with Elmer?
You must be mad.

(CONTINUED)

23 CONTINUED: (6)

23

ETHEL
Oh, for pity's sake. Come along
with me and let's get the canoe
off the porch.

She opens the enclosed porch.

24 INT. PORCH - DAY

24

ETHEL
All right. Grab an end.

Norman takes one end, she lifts the other.

25 EXT. HOUSE

25

They plod slowly down the steps.

NORMAN
This is not our canoe. It's way
too heavy.

The PHONE RINGS.

(CONTINUED)

25 CONTINUED:

25

ETHEL

Well, what do you know? The phone's ringing.

NORMAN

Who the hell is it?

ETHEL

I don't know, dear.

She sets her end down. Norman sets down his. PHONE RINGS AGAIN. *

NORMAN

I'll get it. Maybe it's St. Peter. *
You take the canoe on down.

He hurries back to the house. Ethel drags the canoe.

26 INT. LIVING ROOM

26

The PHONE RINGS. Norman enters. He pauses a moment to regain his breath. He lifts the receiver.

NORMAN

Hello? Who is this?... The operator! What do you want?... Oh, to check the ring. Of course. Does it work?

27 EXT. PORCH - DAY

27

Norman carries the phone onto the porch and watches as Ethel gathers up paddles and cushions, puts the binoculars around her neck and carries them all down to the canoe.

NORMAN

Yes, I guess it did ring here. Thank you... I beg your pardon?... Oh. Thank you.

He hangs up the phone and leaves it on the porch. He ambles down the bank shaking his head.

NORMAN

(continuing)

She said to have a nice day. What a strange thing to say. What did she think I was going to do? Well, the phone works.

(CONTINUED)

27 CONTINUED:

27

ETHEL

That's good.

28 EXT. DOCK - LATE AFTERNOON

28

He sits on a rock and watches Ethel move sections of dock.

ETHEL

Oh, guess who else I ran into?

NORMAN

You ran into someone else? The woods are full of people. What's this place coming to?

ETHEL

It was only Charlie.

NORMAN

Who's Charlie?

ETHEL

Charlie, Norman. The mailman. He said he'd come round and put in our dock for us.

NORMAN

I'll put in the dock.

ETHEL

You won't put in the dock.

NORMAN

Why not?

ETHEL

Because you're too old.

NORMAN

I'm not old at all. I'm middle-aged.

ETHEL

Charlie says our boat's all ready and he'll bring it on Saturday!

NORMAN

I remember Charlie when he was just a little fellow.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN (CONT'D)

He used to laugh at anything. I thought then he was a bit deficient.

ETHEL

Chelsea had such a crush on him. Remember, Norman?

NORMAN

Yes. I could never understand that.

He pulls himself up and studies the beached float.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Remember Chelsea trying to be on the diving team at school? Ha, ha, ha.

(he holds out his hands)

She was about this wide.

He climbs up on the diving board. He may take a jump or two while they talk.

ETHEL

Tsk. She wasn't any such thing. She had a few fat years, that's all.

NORMAN

I should say so. It's no wonder she could never do a back flip. No center of gravity.

ETHEL

Well, she tried... She only did it to please you, anyway.

*

NORMAN

I know.

ETHEL

Oh, Norman. Wouldn't it be nice if I could persuade her to come and spend a few days this summer?

NORMAN

(after a moment)

Mmm. Want to go up to the house and play a quick game of Parcheesi?

(CONTINUED)

28 CONTINUED: (2)

28

ETHEL

Not now, Norman. We've got the whole summer for you to try to win back the fortune you lost to me last year.

NORMAN

Heh heh.

ETHEL

I hope you thought about your tactics over the winter.

NORMAN

Heh heh.

ETHEL

Pretty shoddy, some of those moves of yours.

NORMAN

Heh heh.

The two of them stare out at the lake.

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL

(continuing)

Isn't it beautiful, Norman?

He steps to her and puts his arm around her.

NORMAN

Yes.

ETHEL

Let's take a quick ride, shall we?
First ride of the year.

NORMAN

It's a little cold for that sort
of thing, isn't it?

ETHEL

Come on.

She pushes the canoe into the water and holds the bow.
He hesitates, but finally begins to climb in. The
canoe rocks and Norman stumbles.

NORMAN

Good God.

ETHEL

Well, watch yourself.

NORMAN

I think you're trying to kill me.

ETHEL

I've thought about it.

At last he settles in. Ethel hands him a paddle, then
climbs aboard, and they're off.

Norman and Ethel in the canoe. She is paddling ener-
getically in the bow. He is faking it in the stern.
The canoe, consequently, is veering crookedly.

ETHEL

Are you paddling, Norman?

NORMAN

Of course I'm paddling.

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED:

29

ETHEL

Then you're not steering. Do you want me to take the stern?

NORMAN

I most certainly do not.

He tries a little harder. The canoe glides along by other cottages.

ETHEL

Charlie says he doesn't expect Miss Appley to make it up this summer.

NORMAN

Who's Miss Appley?

ETHEL

Miss Appley, Norman, who lives in there with Miss Tate. They're both in their nineties. They were up here together when I was a teenager. Wearing their neckties, and singing in the gazebo. Holding hands. What a marvelous love affair, if that's what it is.

*
*

NORMAN

Yes.

*
*

ETHEL

Can you imagine being together so long?

NORMAN

No.

ETHEL

Thanks a lot. Charlie says Miss Appley is just too frail and Miss Tate won't come without her. It's sad, isn't it?

NORMAN

Yes.

Norman and Ethel paddle up the shore. A fish breaks the water.

ETHEL

Norman! Look at the fish! My word. It's going to be a good summer. My father always said if the fish start jumping in May it's a good sign. We'll have to go to the village and get your license.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

I don't think I'll be doing any fishing this time around.

ETHEL

All right, Norman...

NORMAN

No point in wasting the money. You'd think they'd give the license free to an old case like me. It's not as though I'd come out here and deplete the entire bass population or anything.

ETHEL

You always catch your share. You always have.

NORMAN

Well, that's all behind me now.

ETHEL

All right, Norman.

They paddle without speaking for a moment. Suddenly Ethel's attention is caught by something. She shrieks.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Norman!

NORMAN

Good God! What is it?

ETHEL

The loons! I've spotted the loons!

She scrambles back in the canoe to retrieve the binoculars.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Oh, my goodness. They're so lovely. Here. Look.

He takes the glasses and trains them on the water.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Do you see them?

(CONTINUED)

29 CONTINUED: (3)

29

NORMAN

No. Oh. Oh, my goodness. There they are.

ETHEL

Aren't they beautiful?

NORMAN

They're huge! I've never seen such big loons in my life.

ETHEL

Those are boats, you poop. Come in closer.

He lowers the glasses. We SEE two loons, huge and black. They swim close to each other.

ETHEL

(continuing)

A husband and a wife. I think they're looking at us.

NORMAN

Yes. They are.

He waves.

ETHEL

They're talking.

NORMAN

I can't make out what they're saying. Can you read beaks?

ETHEL

Look! They're kissing. My word.

NORMAN

How wonderful.

30 ANOTHER ANGLE - ON THE LOONS

30

They do indeed seem to be kissing. But suddenly they look around, wary. We HEAR the SOUND of a MOTORBOAT, loud and threatening.

31 ANOTHER ANGLE

31

Now we SEE the boat, a runabout, sleek and fast, a young couple aboard.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED:

31

They head right at the Loons, who look at the boat, and disappear. The boat zooms right over the spot where the Loons had been.

32 ON THE CANOE

32

ETHEL

My God! What are they doing?

33 ANOTHER ANGLE

33

Now the speedboat continues and heads right at the canoe. Norman paddles like mad. At last the boat veers. *

The young man and young woman wave pleasantly and speed off.

Now the wake of the boat rolls toward the canoe.

NORMAN

(raises his middle finger
in a vulgar gesture, shouting)
Buzz off!! *

Ethel imitates his gesture. *

ETHEL

That's right; Buzz off! *

NORMAN

(shocked)
Ethel! What are you doing? *

ETHEL

What do you mean? *

NORMAN

Don't do that! *

ETHEL

Why not? You did it! *

Norman turns the canoe about to face the waves. *

NORMAN

Never mind, I'll explain later. *

He and Ethel are rocked violently by the waves, but they ride it out. *

34 ANOTHER ANGLE

34

The Loons have now surfaced. One of them calls angrily.

ETHEL (O.S.)

You're absolutely right. They
should be ashamed of themselves!

(CONTINUED)

35 ON THE LAKE

35

The water is almost golden in the late afternoon sun.

ETHEL

Norman. Look at our house. Isn't it beautiful?

NORMAN

Yes...Which one is it?

ETHEL

You're such a poop. It's the one with the birch tree, as you very well know.

NORMAN

Oh, yes, that's right.

They drift for a moment, looking at the distant house, and the Loons. A pastoral picture.

ETHEL

Norman, do you realize this is our forty-eighth summer on Golden Pond.

NORMAN

Hmmm. Probably our last.

ETHEL

Oh, shut up.

She splashes him with her paddle.

35A-D A series of long DISSOLVES between nature shots indicating the passage of time.

35A-D *

36 EXT. DOCK - DAY

36

Ethel is repainting "Thayer" on the metal mailbox. In the b.g. we SEE Norman on the porch reading a paper.

We SEE a boat approaching. In it is CHARLIE MARTIN, a local, simple and good-hearted. He is towing the "Thayer Four," a grand old mahogany speedboat.

ETHEL

My God, Norman! Charlie's brought the boat. Come down and say hello.

NORMAN

You say hello for me.

ETHEL

Oh, come on.

NORMAN

(snapping)

No.

Charlie draws up to the dock and ties the Thayer Four.

(CONTINUED)

36

CONTINUED:

36

ETHEL

Oh, Charlie, you've done a beautiful job.

CHARLIE

Thank you, Ethel.

ETHEL

Hello, Thayer Four. You look wonderful.

NORMAN

(from porch)

Make sure he ties it up right

ETHEL

Oh, shut up.

CHARLIE

Hello, Norman.

Norman nods hello.

ETHEL

Come on down, Norman, we'll go for a ride.

NORMAN

No, thank you.

ETHEL

So enthusiastic, isn't he?

*

Charlie laughs.

ETHEL

(continuing)

I love your laugh, Charlie.

CHARLIE

Thank you, Ethel.

Norman steps down toward them.

NORMAN

He's got the whatsie on the wrong side. The thing you tie the boat to. That's not where we put the boat. It's all wrong.

(CONTINUED)

36 CONTINUED: (3)

36

ETHEL

(to Norman)

Well. You should have been down here helping instead of sitting on the porch being disagreeable.

NORMAN

I can see that now.

He looks around, feeling rather smug. He looks at Ethel's paintwork.

NORMAN

(continuing)

You spelled our name wrong.

ETHEL

What.

She actually looks at the mailbox, then back at Norman who smiles slyly. Ethel shakes her head.

37 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

37

Norman and Ethel are playing Parcheesi. Ethel throws the dice.

ETHEL

Look at that. Eleven!
(she moves)
Five -- six -- seven -- eight --
nine -- ten -- eleven. Puts me
right on your man. How about that?

NORMAN

(challenging)

Where were you?

*
*
*

ETHEL

Oh, don't give me that.

*
*

Norman glowers at her.

NORMAN

Five -- six -- seven -- eight --
nine -- ten -- eleven. Damn it!

Ethel smiles at him.

38 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

38

Norman is hunched over a newspaper, scanning the classified ads with a magnifying glass. He nods his head and calls.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

38

NORMAN

Here's one. Listen. 'Driver wanted for occasional chaufferring and errands, five days a week. Pay negotiable.' Sound about right?

No answer.

NORMAN

(continuing)

'Experience required.' Well, I guess I've had enough experience. I've driven enough cars, God knows.

(he calls)

How many cars would you say I've had?

No answer.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Twenty probably, if you don't count the Nash. Twenty cars and one Nash. Sounds like experience to me.

(he calls)

I think I'll give these people a call. Huh?

No answer.

NORMAN

(continuing)

There's no number. How do you like that? For God's sake. It's so typical. They want a man for a job and yet they don't list a number. Well, I hope those errands weren't too crucial. Good God!

There is a KNOCK at the DOOR. Norman looks up, startled. He stands and calls.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Someone's at the door.

39 EXT. BACK STOOP - DAY

39

Ethel stands on the step, a berry bucket in each hand. In the washtub behind her we SEE little plants growing.

ETHEL

It's me, you poop. Open up.

The door opens and Norman ushers her in.

40 INT. BACK ENTRYWAY - DAY

40

NORMAN

Where have you been?

ETHEL

Out picking berries. There are oodles and oodles of little strawberries along the old town road. Look.

NORMAN

How nice.

ETHEL

What on earth you're doing in here on a morning like this is beyond me.

NORMAN

(carrying his papers)

Oh, I've been quite busy. I've been looking through yesterday's paper for gainful employment.

ETHEL

Here we go again.

She shakes her head and disappears into the kitchen.

NORMAN

Very good prospects, I think. Chauffeurs, yardwork. The Dairy Divine wants an ice cream dipper. I think I could do something like that, don't you?

He realizes she's not in the room. He looks about, irritated, then heads for the kitchen.

41 INT. KITCHEN - DAY

41

Ethel is busily dumping her berries into a large bowl.

(CONTINUED)

41

CONTINUED:

41

Norman enters.

NORMAN

Oh, here you are. What do you think?

ETHEL

What are you going to do if you call and someone says, 'Come on over and start tomorrow'?

NORMAN

Go on over and start tomorrow.

ETHEL

Oh, for the love of God. Whatever is the matter with you? Why don't you take a bucket and go pick us another quart of strawberries? I'll fix us up a scrumptious shortcake for lunch.

NORMAN

You want me to pick strawberries?

ETHEL

Yes. Do I have to put an ad in the paper?

NORMAN

I'm not sure I know how to pick strawberries.

ETHEL

There's really nothing to it, Norman. You bend over and you pick them. Come on.

NORMAN

Bend over? Where are they? *

ETHEL

On the ground, where they belong. *

NORMAN

The last time we picked blueberries they were on a bush. Didn't have to bend over at all. *

ETHEL

Well, these are strawberries. They're on the ground. *

She leads him out.

42

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

42

Ethel leads Norman down the stoop and into the yard.
We HEAR a MOTORBOAT. Norman looks at the lake.

NORMAN

Oh. Here comes what's-his-name.
He'll be bringing the paper, you
know.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN (CONT'D)

I wouldn't want to miss any career opportunities just because I was off looking for strawberries.

ETHEL

(leading him along)

I'll pay you, Norman. It could be the beginning of something big. You may become a major strawberry picker.

NORMAN

Not if I have to be bending over all the time. I think you're trying to kill me.

ETHEL

I've thought about it.

NORMAN

You needn't bother. I'm on borrowed time as it is.

ETHEL

Would you please take your cheery personality and get out of here?

NORMAN

I hope you'll be prepared to massage my bent back this evening.

ETHEL

(kissing him)

With pleasure.

She gives him a push and he steps away, mumbling.

NORMAN

Maybe I could lie down to pick the berries.

He seems confused as he turns and trudges into the woods. Ethel watches, concerned, but glad to have gotten him into motion. She looks at the lake, heads down to it.

43

EXT. DOCK - DAY

43

Ethel moves toward the house as Charlie roars up in his boat. He waves. And cuts his motor. *

CHARLIE

(shouting) *

Morning, Ethel.

ETHEL

(shouting) *

Come on up and have some coffee.
You can take five minutes off.
I'll write you a note and you
can send it to the Postmaster
General.

Charlie loves this. He laughs and clambers out of the boat. He holds a small package and a packet of mail, from which he pulls a letter.

CHARLIE

You got a letter from Chelsea.

(CONTINUED)

43

CONTINUED:

43

*

CHARLIE (CONT'D)

The rest is just bills and junk
like that.

He heads up the bank.

*

44

EXT. PORCH - DAY

44

Charlie pulls open the door, but it falls over
on him. He sets down the mail and props the door
against the wall.

*

CHARLIE

(calling)

Uh-oh. I think I broke your
door.

*

ETHEL

(from the
kitchen)

Oh, no, it's been that way for a
month now. Norman is supposed to
fix it, but I'm afraid it's not
high on his list of priorities.

*

*

Which makes Charlie laugh. They step inside.

45

EXT. FOREST - DAY

45

Norman is standing at the end of the lane with his berry bucket. He slaps at a mosquito. He steps into the woods, then quickly steps back to the lane, unsettled. He tries again. Into the woods, a little further this time. He stops, stares up at a huge tree as though surprised to find it there. He seems ready to cry.

46

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

46

Charlie stands by the fireplace, not totally comfortable in the Thayer home. He looks at the photos, and smiles.

47

ON THE PHOTOS

47

One of Norman as a younger man, in his bathing suit, on the diving board.

One of the daughter, Chelsea, plump, but pretty. Also on the diving board. He picks it up.

48

ON CHARLIE

48

He gazes at the photo with great interest.

ETHEL (O.S.)

Come and get a biscuit, Charlie.

He fumbles with the picture and puts it back. He steps into the kitchen.

49

INT. KITCHEN - DAY

49

Ethel is setting out coffee and biscuits. Charlie hands Ethel the letter from Chelsea. Ethel slips it into her pocket.

CHARLIE

You know, they lost a little girl in Purgatory Cove. She was visiting her grandparents, you know, the McCreas up on the point...

ETHEL

Of course...

CHARLIE

Yuh....She sailed her little sailboat right into Purgatory Cove; and went up on the rocks and drowned. I felt just awful.

ETHEL

Oh, dear, dear. Isn't that tragic? Poor Mrs. McCrea.

CHARLIE

Yuh. Count your blessings.

Charlie takes a biscuit and sits at the table. Ethel looks at him fondly and sits beside him.

ETHEL

How's your mother, Charlie?

CHARLIE

My mother?

ETHEL

Yes.

CHARLIE

She's holding her own.

(he sits and roars with laughter)

She fell down, you know, a couple of months ago.

(CONTINUED)

49

CONTINUED:

49

ETHEL

Oh. I didn't know.

CHARLIE

Yuh, a couple of months ago, right on her rump, when she was out helping clean up town common with the Ladies Auxiliary. She was having a tug-a-war with a dead juniper bush, and she won, or lost, depending on how you look at it.

(he laughs)

But, if you'll pardon the expression, she's one old lady who really believes in busting her ass for the community.

They both roar with laughter. Suddenly the door opens and Norman enters. They stop laughing.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

(continuing)

Hi, Norman.

ETHEL

Hello, Norman. What are you doing back already? You've barely left.

NORMAN

So? I moved fast. I ran all the way, picked without stopping, and ran all the way back.

ETHEL

(going to him)

Let me see what you've got.

NORMAN

I'll just dump them in with yours.

He starts for the sink. Ethel grabs for the bucket, it tumbles to the floor and bounces.

ETHEL

You didn't get a single strawberry. What's the matter with you?

NORMAN

I must have eaten them all.

An awkward moment as the three exchange looks.

NORMAN

(continuing)

No mail today, Charlie?

CHARLIE

Holy Mackinoly! I left it on the porch.

NORMAN

How about bringing it in? Could you do that?

CHARLIE

You bet.

He exits. Ethel stares at Norman.

ETHEL

Would you like a glass of milk, Norman?

(CONTINUED)

49 CONTINUED: (2)

49

NORMAN
No!

ETHEL
I'll get you one.

Norman follows Charlie into the living room.

50 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

50

NORMAN
I see you broke the screen door,
Charlie.

CHARLIE
Oh, well, it's just missing its
little thingamabobbers for the
hinges. I could bring you a
couple from town tomorrow.

NORMAN
No, just be careful next time.

Charlie hands the package and packet of mail to Norman,
who goes back into the kitchen. Charlie follows.

51 INT. KITCHEN

51

Norman sits and studies the package. Ethel sets a
glass of milk by him.

ETHEL
Here, Norman, drink this.

NORMAN
Thank you, nurse.

ETHEL
Sit down, Charlie, and finish your
coffee.

He looks uncomfortably at Norman, then sits.

ETHEL
(continuing)
What have you got there, Norman?

NORMAN
I have no idea. I can't open it.
Here, could you bite this, please?

(CONTINUED)

51 CONTINUED:

51

He hands it to Charlie, who laughs and pulls it open.

ETHEL

Ah. It's your medicine.

NORMAN

Oh, goody, what a swell surprise.

ETHEL

(to Charlie)

It's nothing serious. Just for his palpitations.

NORMAN

That's right, Charlie, I have occasional heart throbs.

ETHEL

We got a letter from Chelsea.

NORMAN

Oh?

He hides in his newspaper. Ethel busies herself with the letter. A moment passes, Charlie feels slightly left out.

CHARLIE

Well, how is old Chelsea?

Norman doesn't answer. Ethel doesn't look up.

ETHEL

Mm-mmm.

NORMAN

Look at the goddam Orioles. Baltimore has always been a sneaky town.

ETHEL

Norman! She says she's coming for your birthday.

NORMAN

Really? How nice.

ETHEL

Yes. And she's bringing her friend.

(to Charlie)

She has the nicest boyfriend.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

Oh.

He half laughs.

ETHEL

They're coming together and then they're going on to Europe for awhile.

NORMAN

Ohhh. Well, I don't want crowds of people here on my birthday. I don't want crowds of people watching me turn older.

ETHEL

Oh, pooh. There'll be just the three of us. Is three a crowd?

NORMAN

That's what they say.

CHARLIE

That's right. Three's a crowd.
(laughs)
What happened to her husband?

ETHEL

Wait a minute. It's not that Freddie person. This is a different boyfriend altogether..

NORMAN

What the hell is going on?
Detroit has disappeared. Good God!

ETHEL

What is it, Norman?

NORMAN

Detroit is gone. Three weeks ago they looked like a contender, and now this stupid paper has them missing.

CHARLIE

What happened to her husband?

ETHEL

What did you say, Charlie?

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE

I wondered what happened to
Chelsea's husband.

ETHEL

He didn't work out.

(reading)

She says she's in love. With a
dentist.

NORMAN

Oh, really? Does her boyfriend
know about this?

ETHEL

That is her boyfriend. Her new
boyfriend is a dentist.

CHARLIE

That's interesting.

NORMAN

That's who she's bringing here? A
dentist?

ETHEL

Yes.

NORMAN

Oh, God, he'll be staring at our
teeth all the time. Why does she
have such a fascination with
Jewish people?

ETHEL

Who said this one is Jewish?

NORMAN

He's a dentist, isn't he? Name me
one dentist who isn't Jewish.

ETHEL

Your brother.

NORMAN

My brother is deceased. Name me
one living dentist who isn't
Jewish.

ETHEL

Oh, for Lord's sake.
(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL (CONT'D)
This particular dentist who's coming to celebrate your birthday is named Ray, and that doesn't sound Jewish.

NORMAN
It would depend on the last name, I'd say.

ETHEL
That is his last name.

NORMAN
His last name is Ray?

ETHEL
Yes. Bill Ray.

NORMAN
Bill Ray. That sounds rather flippant.

ETHEL
Well, shall we ask him not to come?

NORMAN
No. I think we should have representatives from all walks of life here for my last birthday party.

ETHEL
Oh, God.
(she stands)
I think this medicine should be put away from all this hot air.

She carries the package out of the kitchen. Norman stares at Charlie.

NORMAN
Why didn't you marry Chelsea?

CHARLIE
You wouldn't let me.

NORMAN
Oh. You could have married someone else, I would have allowed that.

(CONTINUED)

CHARLIE
I didn't want anyone else... How
old will you be?

*
*

NORMAN
When?

*

CHARLIE
On your birthday.

*
*

NORMAN
One hundred three.

*
*

CHARLIE
Miss Appley was ninety-seven in
May. Isn't that amazing?

NORMAN
Yes.

CHARLIE
She died, you know.

NORMAN
No.

CHARLIE
Yuh. Last Tuesday. We got a call
in case any mail comes up.

NORMAN
They gave you a forwarding address
for Miss Appley?

Charlie roars at this. Ethel enters.

ETHEL
What's so funny?

*

NORMAN
One of the lesbians expired.

Which sends Charlie into paroxysms of laughter.

ETHEL
Oh, Norman.
(to Charlie)
Which one?

CHARLIE
Miss Appley.

ETHEL
Oh, dear. Well, she had a good,
full life.

51 CONTINUED: (6)

51

NORMAN

Charlie says she was ninety-seven.

ETHEL

Really? How wonderful.

NORMAN

Puts us all to shame, doesn't it?
There's something to be said for a
deviant lifestyle.

CHARLIE

(standing and
laughing)

I always liked those old ladies,
but I sure used to wonder what the
heck was going on in there. Well,
thanks for the coffee, Ethel. You
still make the best biscuits on
the lake.

ETHEL

Thank you, dear. You must come
round when Chelsea's here.

CHARLIE

Oh, yuh. I haven't seen her in a
long time. Well...

ETHEL

Norman, Charlie's leaving.

NORMAN

Good. 'Bye.

CHARLIE

Goodbye.

NORMAN

Watch out for that screen door.

Ethel leads Charlie out of the kitchen.

ETHEL

He's such a poop, isn't he?

52 EXT. HOUSE - DAY

52

Ethel and Charlie walk across the porch and down the
bank.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED:

52

ETHEL

Seen our loons out there today?

CHARLIE

Yuh. Out by Honey Island.
They're teaching their baby to fly.

ETHEL

Oh. Isn't that exciting?

53 EXT. DOCK - DAY

53

Charlie climbs into his boat.

CHARLIE

Yuh. Well, see you next time.

He starts his motor and pulls away. Ethel waves, and looks out at the lake. She heads back to the house.

54 EXT. PORCH - DAY

54

Norman steps out with the newspaper folder to the classifieds.

ETHEL

Norman, isn't that exciting?
Teaching their baby to fly.

NORMAN

Listen to this. 'Retired people sought for handbill delivery. Some walking involved.' I should call, I can walk.

ETHEL

Is that why you came rushing back here? To read those goddam ads?

Norman throws down the paper. He glares at Ethel.

NORMAN

Do you want to know why I came back so fast? I got to the end of our lane and I couldn't remember where the old town road was. I went a little way into the woods and nothing looked familiar, not one damn tree.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

7-14-80

37 54

NORMAN (CONT'D)

And it scared me half to death.
So I came running back here to
you, to see your pretty face, and
to feel that I was safe. That I
was still me.

He puts his face in his hands. Ethel is shocked by this,
but she rallies quickly. She sits by him and rubs his back.

ETHEL

You're safe, you old poop. And
you're definitely still you, still
picking on poor Charlie. After
lunch, after we gobble up all the
strawberries, we'll take ourselves
to the old town road. We'll remember
it all, my darling, we've walked it
a thousand thousand times.

(she pauses, trying to find
the right words)

Listen to me mister, you're my knight
in shining armor and don't you forget
it. We're going to get right back on
that horse. I'm going to be right
behind you holding on tight, and away
we're going to go, go, go!

*
*
*
*

NORMAN

I don't like horses.

They look at each other.

NORMAN

(continuing)

You are a pretty old dame, aren't you?

She hugs him.

NORMAN

(continuing)

What are you doing with a dotty old
son of a bitch like me?

ETHEL

I haven't the vaguest idea.

She holds him close. They stare out at the lake.

54A-D A series of long DISSOLVES between nature shots indi- 54A-D *
cating the passage of time.

55 EXT. CHANNEL - DAY

55

Ethel drives the Thayer Four slowly along the channel
while Norman sits glumly in the passenger seat.

56 EXT. MARINA - DAY

56

Ethel draws the boat up to the marina dock. Norman holds onto the pier while Ethel jumps out.

ETHEL

Do you want to stay and watch the boat while I run up to the store?

NORMAN

I think I'm qualified to watch the boat.

ETHEL

Well, come with me if you want.

NORMAN

No, thank you very much.

Ethel shrugs and turns to SUMNER TODD, a teenaged gas station attendant. His friend, also a teenager, loafs nearby.

ETHEL

Hello, Sumner.

SUMNER

'Morning, Mrs. Thayer.

ETHEL

Could you fill us up, dear?

SUMNER

Oh, sure.

ETHEL

Norman will help you.

Sumner looks over at Norman without enthusiasm as Ethel walks quickly up the shore.

57 EXT. MARINA - DAY

57

Norman watches Sumner closely. He looks at the pump and shakes his head.

NORMAN

Do you know how much gas cost when I was your age? Twelve cents a gallon.

(CONTINUED)

57 CONTINUED:

57

SUMNER

(looks at his friend,
then at the sky)

Is that a fact? I didn't even
know they had gas back then.

The other boy giggles and Sumner smiles.

NORMAN

(looks from one
to the other)

What are you, a couple of nitwits?
You think it's funny being old?
My whole goddam body's fallin'
apart. Sometimes I can't even go
to the bathroom when I want to,
but I'm still a man, let me tell
you. I can take on either one of
you punks.

He steps toward them, ready to fight, when Ethel ar-
rives with a bag of groceries. The boys look at her,
relieved to be rescued. Norman climbs quickly into the
driver's seat. He helps Ethel into the boat.

NORMAN

(continuing)

I'll drive home.

ETHEL

Are you sure?

NORMAN

(snapping)

Yes! If I take a wrong turn and
end up in Michigan or somewhere,
you be sure and tell me.

Ethel sees no point in arguing. She sits and waves at
Sumner who pushes them away from the dock. The boys
stand openmouthed, watching them go.

58 EXT. LAKE - DAY

58

Norman has a look of great intensity in his eyes.
Ethel looks nervous.

ETHEL

You remember, don't you, to go
outside the flag?

(CONTINUED)

He doesn't seem to hear. He heads for the inside of a buoy that is some distance from the shore.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Norman, you fool. Go outside the flag!

We SEE rocks jutting up between the flag and land. The boat is racing toward them.

ETHEL

(continuing; scared now)

Norman, turn the boat!

But Norman is looking stubborn. He bears down on the rocks, and only at the last minute does he turn the boat and travel alongside them. His face shows nothing as he now speeds to the outside of the flag. Ethel looks more than a little undone.

58A-D A series of long DISSOLVES between nature shots indicating the passage of time.

58A-D *

59 INT. LIVING ROOM - DUSK

59

Ethel is bustling about, excited, wearing her usual grubbies. She hangs a sign which reads, "Happy Birthday, Norman." On the wall across from it is one saying, "Welcome Home, Chelsea."

60 INT. BEDROOM - DUSK

60

Norman is standing at the mirror trying his tie. He scowls at his reflection and pulls at his collar, which seems oddly large for him. We HEAR the LOONS CALL.

61 EXT. PORCH - DUSK

61

Ethel rushes to the door and pushes it. Down it falls.

ETHEL

Oh, Norman, for God's sake.

She steps out, closing the big door, and moving the screen door. She rushes down to the dock.

62 EXT. DOCK - DUSK

62

Ethel stands at the end, in the golden glow of sunset.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

62

ETHEL
Yoo-hooo, loo-oons! Loony
loo-oons! Yoo-hooo!

The LOONS ANSWER. Ethel is delighted.

63 EXT. WIDOW'S WATCH - DUSK

63 *

Norman is standing on the balcony looking down at Ethel, amused.

NORMAN
I don't think you should do that
in front of Chelsea's companion.

ETHEL
Oh, pooh, I'm just talking to my
friends. My, my, look at you.
You have on a tie.

NORMAN
Yes, I know. I put it there. Do
I look all right? I haven't
overdressed, have I?

*

ETHEL
You look sexy! I'm going to
have to do some pretty fast
maneuvers to catch up with you.

*

NORMAN
I have other ties. You could come
as Miss Appley.

ETHEL
Thanks a lot.

She goes inside.

64 INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

64

Norman comes down the stairs.

NORMAN
'Welcome Home, Chelsea.' I see my
birthday wasn't cause enough for a
celebration.

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL

Oh, stop. I just want our little girl to feel welcome, that's all.

NORMAN

(rechecking his tie
at the hallway
mirror)

Uh-huh.

ETHEL

Wouldn't it be nice if we could all get along this time.

NORMAN

Uh-huh. Where the hell are they? I'm getting older by the minute.

ETHEL

They said they'll be here when they get here.

NORMAN

Is that what they said? That's a hell of an attitude. No wonder we have no grandchildren.

ETHEL

What would we do with grandchildren?

NORMAN

Toss them on our knees. We're the last of the Thayers, you know. End of the line for a damn good name.

ETHEL

Well, we'll take it out in style.

Their attention is caught by the SOUND of a CAR. We SEE headlights THROUGH the window. Norman and Ethel look at each other.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Oh, no! They're here! And I'm not dressed. I look like an old character.

NORMAN

Well, run upstairs and change if it makes you feel better.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED: (2)

64

ETHEL

Will you be nice to them?

NORMAN

Sure. I'll explain to them the risk involved in arriving late for an old man's birthday party.

We HEAR a VOICE CALLING.

CHELSEA (O.S.)

Hey! Anybody home?

ETHEL

Too late!

Ethel opens the back door and rushes out.

*
*

65 EXT. HOUSE - EVENING

65

CHELSEA THAYER WAYNE steps toward the house. She is forty-two, attractive, restless, with Norman's humor. She grins at Ethel. Behind her a car is turning around in the growing darkness.

CHELSEA

Heeeey.

ETHEL

(stepping to her)

Hey yourself.

After the briefest pause they embrace.

CHELSEA

Mommy.

ETHEL

Dear little girl... Chelsea.

*

Chelsea looks to the house. We SEE Norman at the screen door peering out. Chelsea walks up the steps and inside. Ethel follows.

66 INT. LIVING ROOM - EVENING

66

Chelsea smiles at Norman, then steps to him and hugs him awkwardly. He is embarrassed, surprised. He tries to respond. Chelsea steps back.

CHELSEA

Hello, Norman. Happy birthday.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

Look at you. Look at this little fat girl, Ethel.

Chelsea, who is not fat, looks quickly at her body.

ETHEL

Oh, stop it. You're thin as a rail. Isn't she, Norman?

NORMAN

Oh, sure.

A moment of adjustment. Ethel jumps in.

ETHEL

Dear Chelsea. I'm so glad you're home.

CHELSEA

I thought we'd never get here. We rented a car that explodes every forty miles.

NORMAN

You rented a car?

CHELSEA

Yes. In Boston.

NORMAN

Huh. What sort of car is it?

CHELSEA

Oh. I don't know. Red, I think.

ETHEL

Ooh! A red car!

NORMAN

No. I meant -- what sort of make is it?

CHELSEA

Um. I don't know.

ETHEL

She doesn't know, dear. It doesn't matter.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

Of course it doesn't matter. I was just curious.

CHELSEA

Well, I should have looked, I guess. It's um, very ugly, and it breaks down a lot.

NORMAN

Ugly and it breaks down a lot. That sounds like a Nash.

An awkward moment.

CHELSEA

Yeah. Well...

She looks about, smiles at her "Welcome Home" sign.

ETHEL

(stepping in)

Where's your friend? You did bring your friend, didn't you?

CHELSEA

I knew I was forgetting something.

She steps to the door.

NORMAN

That's still on then?

CHELSEA

As far as I know.

(she calls out)

Come on in, no one's going to bite you. Mommy and Norman, this is Billy Ray.

In walks BILLY RAY, thirteen and sassy and full of life, a bit shy and defensive, lousy posture. He smiles.

BILLY

How ya doin'?

He grabs Norman's hand. Norman stares at him, shocked at first. Ethel loves it.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

You seem awfully young to be a dentist.

CHELSEA

This is Billy Ray, Jr.

NORMAN

Oh. I'm Norman Thayer, Jr.
Where's...?

CHELSEA

His father is out trying to park the car.

ETHEL

(taking Billy's hand)

Well, what a great surprise. You can call me Ethel, Billy, and you can call Norman Norman.

CHELSEA

I like your logic, Mommy. I'm going to see if Bill's driven into the lake.

She exits. Ethel steps to the door to watch.

ETHEL

It's so dark outside. It never used to be this dark.

Norman is staring down poor Billy.

BILLY

I hear you turned eighty today.

NORMAN

Is that what you heard?

BILLY

Yeah. That's really old.

NORMAN

Oh? You should meet my father.

BILLY

Your father's still alive?

NORMAN

No, but you should meet him.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (4)

66

Ethel steps to them.

ETHEL

Isn't this fun? Norman, why don't we put Billy in Chelsea's old room and then he can look out at the lake in the morning.

NORMAN

Why don't we put him out on the float and he can look at the lake all night long.

BILLY

I'd like that.

ETHEL

I'm afraid you'd be eaten alive by all the bugs.

NORMAN

So?

ETHEL

Norman, take him up and we'll show him where everything is. *

NORMAN

Come on, boy, grab your bag.

Norman scowls at Ethel, but leads Billy upstairs. *

BILLY

I just had a birthday, too. I turned thirteen two weeks ago.

NORMAN

Oh? We're practically twins.

Ethel turns as Chelsea enters. *

CHELSEA

He will be right here. He thought he had to lock the car. *

ETHEL

I'm so glad you're here. *

CHELSEA

Norman looks very old. *

ETHEL

Well...I don't know.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (5)

66

CHELSEA
(quickly)
You look great though.

ETHEL
Thank you. So do you. I love
your hair like that.

CHELSEA
(surprised, she touches
her hair)
You do? Um. How's his mind? Is
he remembering things any better?

Norman has appeared on the landing. He stops when he
hears this.

ETHEL
Oh, he's all right.

NORMAN
Come on, Billy, I'll show you the
bathroom, if I can remember where it
is.

He disappears again. Chelsea looks at Ethel and smiles.

CHELSEA
He hasn't changed too much, has he?

ETHEL
Nope. Still impossible. It means
so much to him to have you here.

CHELSEA
Yeah. Great. Now he's got someone
to pick on.

ETHEL
Oh, stop. Thank you for coming.

CHELSEA
Thank you for inviting me.

66 Bill enters carrying a load of suitcases.

66

CHELSEA
Look at you. You made it. This
is my mother. Mommy, Bill Ray.

ETHEL
How do you do?

(CONTINUED)

66_ CONTINUED: (6)

66

BILL

Hi. I think I saw a bear.

ETHEL

Oh, you wouldn't have seen a bear out here this time of year. There are a lot of very nasty moths flying around, though.

BILL

This was kind of big for a moth.

CHELSEA

If you want a real scare you've got to meet my father.

Billy comes crashing down the stairs. Norman follows.

BILLY

Dad, they do have indoor plumbing.

BILL

Oh. Good.

BILLY

Chelsea was just bullshitting us.

BILL

Billy!

CHELSEA

(to Ethel)

I always try to paint a rustic picture of life on Golden Pond.

ETHEL

Oh, it's rustic all right.

BILL

It's lovely though. Lovely rusticity.

He looks up as Norman approaches.

NORMAN

We've been peeing indoors for forty years.

BILL

You must be Norman.

NORMAN

Yes, I must be. Who are you?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (7)

66

BILL

Bill Ray.

NORMAN

Bill Ray? The dentist?

BILL

Yes.

NORMAN

Want to see my teeth?

He bares them.

ETHEL

Norman!

BILL

(undaunted)

I just want to tell you, sir, how glad I am to be here. Chelsea's told us so much about you and your wife and your wonderful house on the lake, and I'm very pleased she's brought us here.

This fine sentiment is greeted by a typical Norman silence, which makes Bill feel like a bigger fool than he should.

NORMAN

I'm frankly surprised Chelsea could find the way.

ETHEL

She's here now, Norman, that's the important thing.

NORMAN

Do you visit your folks, young man?

BILL

No. My parents have both passed away.

NORMAN

I see. Then you have a good excuse, don't you?

ETHEL

(sweetly)

Norman...

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (8)

66

CHELSEA

Norman. Please...

NORMAN

What? Am I not allowed to speak
to our guest? Is that it?

(to Bill)

They're afraid I'm going to embarrass
them.

CHELSEA

Well. I'm going down and say hello
to the lake. Anyone like to come?

BILLY

Me. I've never seen anyone say
hello to a lake.

CHELSEA

Then this will be a valuable
experience for you, wise guy. It's
always my first order of business
when I get to Golden Pond. Coming,
Mommy?

ETHEL

Yes. Want to take the boat?

BILLY

All right!

CHELSEA

Let's go, Bill.

BILL

Where? Outside?

CHELSEA

That's where the lake is. Coming,
Norman?

NORMAN

No. I think I'll just sit here and
enjoy the quiet.

BILL

(quickly)
I'll stay, too.

NORMAN

With Bill.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (9)

66

Chelsea and Ethel exchange a glance. Chelsea shrugs and opens the door.

CHELSEA

The screen door's fallen down.

ETHEL

Really? Norman will fix it.

Norman makes a face. Billy follows the women outside leaving Norman staring at Bill, who feels more than a little uncomfortable.

BILL

I love your house.

NORMAN

Thank you. It's not for sale.

BILL

Oh, no, I wasn't thinking about buying it, I just like it. It has a charming ambience.

A word he clearly likes using.

Norman looks at him, less than impressed. Bill tries again.

BILL

(continuing)

How does it feel to turn eighty?

NORMAN

(scowling at him)

It feels twice as bad as it did turning forty.

BILL

Well, I know what that's like. I turned forty five years ago. I'm forty-five now....(pause)...Norman.

NORMAN

Yes?

BILL

May I call you Norman?

NORMAN

I believe you just did.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (10)

66

BILL

I don't want to press. What shall
I call your wife?

NORMAN

How about Ethel? That's her name.
Ethel Thayer. Thounth like I'm
lithping, doethn't it? Ethel Thayer.
That 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, but not her daddy.
Ethel is her mommy, and I'm Norman.

BILL

Oh.

The conversation screeches to a halt. Norman stands.

NORMAN

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

He steps to the shelves.

NORMAN

(continuing)
Maybe a novelette. Maybe some-
thing out of Readers' Digest
Abridged. Here's Treasure Island.
Ever read it?

(CONTINUED)

BILL

Yes, it's great. I'd recommend it.

NORMAN

No need for that. I've read it, too. But my mind is 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 Treasure Island?

BILL

No. But I intend to have him read it. His mother's been the real force in his life lately and now I'm trying to...eradicate some of the...dishevelment.

He looks to Norman to see what sort of impression he's registered. None apparently. Norman has settled down and is reading his book.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (12)

66*

BILL

(continuing)

Yeah, things are coming together pretty nicely for me now, and I'm feeling very good about myself. Meeting Chelsea was a major... thing. We have a very kinetic relationship, very positive. I'm sure you'd be pleased.

Norman looks up from his book.

NORMAN

What do you charge for a filling?

BILL

Huh?

NORMAN

You're a dentist, aren't you? What do you charge for a filling?

BILL

Um. Forty dollars, generally.

NORMAN

Forty dollars! Good God.

He returns to his book.

BILL

Um. Norman...

(quickly)

We'd like to sleep together if it's all right with you.

NORMAN

What do you mean?

BILL

We'd like to sleep together, in the same room, in the same bed, if you don't find that offensive.

NORMAN

All three of you?

BILL

Oh, no! Just two.

NORMAN

You and Billy?

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (13)

66*

BILL

No.

NORMAN

Not Chelsea and Billy?

BILL

No.

NORMAN

That leaves just Chelsea and you then.

BILL

That's right.

NORMAN

Why would I find that offensive? You're not planning on doing something unusual, are you?

BILL

No. Just...

He can't go on.

NORMAN

That doesn't seem too offensive. As long as you're quiet.

BILL

Thank you.

NORMAN

Chelsea always slept in the same bed with her husband.

BILL

Yes, I'm sure.

NORMAN

And Ethel and I do, you know. We sleep together. Been doing it for years.

(he thinks about it)

I guess I'd be delighted to have you abuse my daughter under my own room.

BILL

Norman.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (14)

66*

NORMAN

Would you like the room where I first violated her mother, or would you be interested in the master bedroom?

BILL

Um...

NORMAN

Ethel and your son and I could all sleep out back and you could do it right here on the hearth. Like that idea?

BILL

(having heard enough)

You're having a good time, aren't you?

NORMAN

Hmmm?

BILL

Chelsea told me all about you, about how you like to have a good old time with people's heads. She does it, too, sometimes, and sometimes I can get into it, sometimes not. I just want you to know I'm very good at recognizing crap when I hear it. You know, it's not imperative that you and I be friends, but it might be nice. I'm sure you're a fascinating person, and I'm sure it would be fascinating to get to know you. That's obviously not an easy task. But, it's all right, you go ahead and be as poopy as you want, to quote Chelsea, and I'll be as receptive and pleasant as I can. I just want you to bear in mind while you're jerking me around and I'm feeling like a real asshole that I know precisely what you're up to and that I can take only so much of it. Okay? Good.

He pauses, waits for a reaction. Norman has been listening very intently.

(CONTINUED)

BILL

(continuing)

Now, what's the bottom line on the illicit sex question?

NORMAN

Very good. That was a good speech. Bottom line, huh? You're a bottom-line man. All right. Here's the bottom line: oh-kay.

BILL

Huh?

NORMAN

You seem like a nice man. A bit verbose perhaps, but nice.

BILL

Thank you.

NORMAN

And you're right about me. I am fascinating.

BILL

I'm sure you are.

NORMAN

Tell me something. What goes on in a kinetic relationship exactly? Other than what we've just discussed.

BILL

Oh, the usual. We play tennis, go out dancing, we talk to each other.

NORMAN

I've never taken Ethel dancing. I've always felt badly about that. I think she would have liked it, she's the type, you know.

BILL

It's not too late.

NORMAN

That's what you think. My mind and my body are having a great race to see who can poop out first. I'd put my money on the body, but you never know...

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (16)

66*

NORMAN (CONT'D)

Here, now, I didn't mean to weight down our conversation. Let's go back to talking about sex. Anything you want to know, just ask me.

BILL

Well, I do want to make sure I have this little matter clear. Chelsea and I can sleep together, right?

NORMAN

Sure. Please do. Just don't let Ethel catch you.

Now Bill is right back to being confused. Billy bounds in the door.

BILLY

Dad! I paddled a canoe. It's a boat just like the Indians had.

NORMAN

Actually the Indians used a different grade of aluminum.

BILLY

Chelsea wants you to come down, Dad. She and Ethel are going skinny-dipping.

BILL

Skinny-dipping?

NORMAN

Go ahead. Permissiveness runs rampant here on Golden Pond.

Bill heads for the door, stops.

BILL

Oh...Are there any bears around these parts.

NORMAN

Oh, sure. Black bears and grizzlies. One came along here last month and ate an old lesbian.

Bill looks a bit horrified.

(CONTINUED)

66 CONTINUED: (17)

66*

BILLY

Come on, Dad, he's bullshitting
you.

With little confidence Bill steps out.

67 OMITTED
thru
74

67
thru
74

75 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

75

Bill tiptoes along the porch, down into the darkness.
He's convinced there's a bear behind every tree.
Suddenly he notices Billy beside him.

BILL

Where do you think you're going?

BILLY

(grinning)
Skinny-dipping with Chelsea.

BILL

Oh no, you're not. You're going
back in the house and talk to
Mr. Thayer.

BILLY

Bullshit! I'm not goin' in
there with that old turkey. He
gives me the creeps. What if he
dies.

BILL

(grabbing him)

Listen, buster, you behave yourself.
Do you understand? Or I'm going to
send you right back to your mother.
Is that what you want?... Is it?

Billy stands silent.

BILL

(continuing)

Now go on inside and talk to him,
maybe you'll learn something.

Billy turns and walks back to the house. And Bill moves
toward the lake. He stops when he hears the SOUND of
Ethel and Chelsea SKINNY-DIPPING. Not quite ready to
confront their nudity, he settles nervously in a lawn
chair.

76

EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

76

Ethel and Chelsea are indeed skinny-dipping. Their heads bob on the water.

CHELSEA

Remember when I was about nine and I came down and caught you and Norman skinny-dipping.

ETHEL

No, I don't think I remember that.

CHELSEA

I had that big flashlight and I shone it on Norman when he was standing on the diving board all naked. Then he started screaming at me that I was a spy and he sent me to my room for the rest of the year or something. It took me a long time to get over that.

ETHEL

It took Norman a long time before he'd go skinny-dipping again. I remember. He wouldn't get out of the water until I went up and made sure you were asleep. I was so mad at him for yelling at you, I let him float down here for an hour or so.

CHELSEA

Good.

She and Ethel look at each other and laugh.

77

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

77

Norman is watching Billy who is pretending to be interested in the fish poles. A moment passes.

*

BILLY

You going skinny-dipping?

NORMAN

Nope. You?

BILLY

Naw. I try to be selective about who I flash in front of.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN
(not following)

Oh.

BILLY
Chelsea says you're a real heavy-duty fisherman. She calls you the old man of the sea.

*

NORMAN
Ah. I've caught a few. You fish?

BILLY
Nah.

NORMAN
Want to go sometime?

BILLY
I don't know...

NORMAN
Well... We'll see. What do you think of your father?

BILLY
He's not bad...

*

Billy and Norman stare at each other a moment.

NORMAN
Why do you stand with your shoulders all bent like that?

(CONTINUED)

BILLY

I have a lot on my mind.

NORMAN

I see. What do you do out there in California? I mean, what does one do for recreation when one is thirteen and not in school?

BILLY

Cruise chicks.

NORMAN

Hmmm?

BILLY

Meet 'em. Girls. Try to pick them up.

NORMAN

And what do you do with them when you have them?

BILLY

Suck face.

NORMAN

I beg your pardon?

BILLY

You know -- kiss. Suck face -- kiss.

NORMAN

Oh.

He looks from Billy to the book, which he still holds.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Have you ever read this book, Treasure Island?

BILLY

No.

NORMAN

Go read it.

BILLY

Now?

(CONTINUED)

77 CONTINUED: (2)

77

NORMAN

Go on. Read the first chapter and give me a report on it in the morning.

BILLY

I thought we were going to have a party.

NORMAN

I'll call you when the party's underway, if it ever is. Go on.

Billy looks at Norman sideways. But there's something in Norman's authority that Billy responds to favorably.

78 EXT. HOUSE - NIGHT

78

Bill is still seated on the lawn chair. Ethel steps the bank, dressed in a robe.

ETHEL

Hey.

BILL

(startled)

Acch!

ETHEL

Come on down, dear. Chelsea's still in the water. No one should ever skinny-dip alone.

She leads him toward the dock. He stops, scared.

BILL

What's that?

ETHEL

That's a lawn chair. Come on.

79 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

79

Norman looks up casually as Ethel enters.

ETHEL

Well, we've got Bill in the swim of things.

NORMAN

I thought you'd be nude.

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL

Nope. Sorry. I didn't want to overwhelm our guest on his first night. He's nice isn't he?

NORMAN

Yes. Forty dollars a filling.

ETHEL

Forty dollars?

NORMAN

That's enough to keep you off sweets.

ETHEL

He'd be quite a catch wouldn't he?

NORMAN

He said they wanted to sleep together.

ETHEL

Why not? They're big people.

NORMAN

Yes.

ETHEL

You and I did didn't we?

NORMAN

Did we?

ETHEL

Have you been picking on him?

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

Yes. He finds me fascinating.

ETHEL

I'm sure.

She sits on the arm of his chair.

ETHEL

(continuing;
proceeding
carefully)

Norman. Norman, Chelsea wants us to do something. For her. She wants to leave Billy with us for a month.

NORMAN

Which Billy?

ETHEL

Tsk. The little one. Billy. Bill is supposed to have him for the summer and he'd be miserable in Europe. Bill seems very nice, and Chelsea needs someone nice. Couldn't we do that for her?

NORMAN

What would we do with the boy? What would I say to him?

ETHEL

You'd think of something. Let's do it. Let's say we'll do it and give Chelsea some happiness.

Norman looks fully prepared to say no, but he nods.

NORMAN

All right.

ETHEL

You're such a poop. We're going to have a splendid time, the three of us, aren't we?

NORMAN

I don't know. We might.

ETHEL

You really are the sweetest man in the world. And I'm the only one who knows.

80 INT. LIVING ROOM - CLOSEUP - CAKE WITH CANDLES 80

WIDEN as Ethel carries a beautiful candle-covered cake to the table. Ethel, Chelsea, Billy and Bill sing to Norman:

ETHEL, BILLY, CHELSEA AND BILL
Happy birthday, dear Norman,
Happy birthday to you.

Norman hates it. But he's pleased. He rises, takes a deep breath and blows out the candles. Everyone applauds.

NORMAN

I suppose you expect me to sing something now. Well, I'm not about to. I've been trying all day to draw some profound conclusion about living four score years. And I haven't thought of anything. I'm surprised I got here so fast.

(he looks at Ethel)

But I am glad I got to spend so much time with this beautiful woman. What's your name again?

He smiles as Ethel shakes her head. He turns to the others.

NORMAN

(continuing)

And I certainly want to thank all of your people for coming all the way here from Disneyland to witness this historic event.

81 EXT. THAYER DOCK - DAY 81

Bill stands in his designer jeans and Lacoste shirt and Adidas, proudly watching Chelsea backstroking smoothly toward the float. Charlie's boat appears.

82 EXT. FLOAT - DAY 82

Chelsea climbs onto the float and waves as Charlie pulls alongside. They look at each other for a moment.

CHARLIE

Well, Holy Mackinoly. Look at you.
Chelsea Mackinelsea.

(CONTINUED)

CHELSEA

Charlie Mackinarlie.

CHARLIE

(laughing)

Boy, it's good to see you. You've held up good.

CHELSEA

Thanks. So have you.

She turns to Bill and shouts.

CHELSEA

(continuing)

Bill, this is my old friend, Charlie, the mailman.

BILL

Hi, there.

CHARLIE

Hullo.

Charlie reaches his hand to Chelsea.

CHARLIE

(continuing)

Want a ride?

Chelsea smiles and steps into the boat. They move slowly toward the dock.

BILL

(smiles)

So, you actually deliver the mail by boat. What an incredible tradition.

*

CHELSEA

Charlie is a legend on this lake. He gets the mail through no matter what. Isn't that right, Charlie?

CHARLIE

Yuh, I guess so.

BILL

(gazing out at the lake)

It must be a bitch in the winter.

(CONTINUED)

82

CONTINUED: (2)

82

Now Charlie laughs and brings the boat to a smooth stop by the dock.

CHARLIE

Oh, yuh, in the winter I have a hell of a time. Of course there's nobody on the lake to deliver to so I get done a lot faster.

Bill puts a foot up on Charlie's boat.

BILL

You've got a great setup here.
Well, you're a lucky man.

*

He helps Chelsea from the boat.

CHARLIE

(looking at Chelsea)
You're a lucky man, too.

BILL

Yes, I guess I am.

The bow of the boat is now drifting from the dock.
Bill finds himself being stretched.

BILL

(continuing)
Um. What do you do at a time like this?

CHARLIE

I generally just fall into the lake.

BILL

Oh, yes.

And he does. Charlie and Chelsea laugh. Chelsea pulls Bill to her and kisses him. Charlie watches, interested.

83

INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

83

Norman, Ethel, Bill and Billy are playing Parcheesi. Chelsea sits across the room scanning the newspaper. Bill rolls the dice.

BILL

Two threes. What does that mean?

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

(patronizing)

It means doubles. Which always gives you 14, you see.

*

BILL

Oh. Okay.

(he moves)

7, 12, 13, 14. Right? I seem to have landed where you are. What does that mean?

NORMAN

It means you send me home and you get 20 more, for God's sake.

BILLY

All right, Dadders!

BILL

That's good, huh?

ETHEL

Excellent. You're a natural.

NORMAN

I'm starting to regret teaching you this game.

BILL

Hey, Chels, I'm a Parcheesi pro.

Chelsea nods.

NORMAN

Chelsea has never liked playing games. We don't know why. Probably she doesn't like losing.

CHELSEA

I tend to panic when the competition is too intense.

NORMAN

And what is that supposed to mean?

CHELSEA

Nothing.

ETHEL

(trying to keep it light)

We play serious Parcheesi around here. I let Norman win every week or so to keep up his spirits.

NORMAN

Ha, ha, ha.

(CONTINUED)

83 CONTINUED: (2)

83

CHELSEA
(her goat gotten, she
challenges Norman)
What I want to know is why do you
like playing games?

NORMAN
What?

CHELSEA
You seem to like beating people.
I just wonder why.

Norman and Chelsea glare at each other, until he at last
turns and smiles at Bill.

NORMAN
You get another chance, Bill. You
get another roll of the dice.

84 OMITTED
thru
87A

84
thru
87A

88 EXT. GAZEBO - DAWN

88

Mist hovers over the lake in the early morning
light. Chelsea sits wrapped in a blanket, staring
at the lake. Ethel steps down the bank in her robe,
two cups of coffee in her hands. She watches a moment.

ETHEL
Having fun? That's why you came to
camp -- to have fun.

(CONTINUED)

88 CONTINUED:

88

Chelsea tries to smile.

ETHEL

(continuing)

What's the matter with you?

CHELSEA

Nothing.

She looks at the lake; a moment passes.

CHELSEA

(continuing)

I don't think I've ever grown up
on Golden Pond. Do you understand?

ETHEL

(trying to)

I don't think so.

CHELSEA

It doesn't matter. I act like a
big person everywhere else. I'm
in charge of Los Angeles; but I
come back here and I feel like a
little fat girl.

ETHEL

It's only because your father said
that.

CHELSEA

My father is a goddam bastard...
poop!

ETHEL

(automatic reflex)

Watch your language, young lady.

CHELSEA

Are you going to make me wash my
mouth out with soap? That was a
rather bizarre custom. Do you know
that I have spent my whole life
answering to Norman? Even when I'm
3,000 miles away and never see him,
I still find myself answering to
him.

(really mad now, she
shouts)

Norman is a goddam poop!

(CONTINUED)

88

CONTINUED: (2)

88

ETHEL

Oh, for Lord's sake. Here we go again. You had a miserable childhood. Your father was overbearing, your mother ignored you. What else is new? You have this unpleasant chip on your shoulder which is very unattractive. You stay away for years at a time. You only come home when I beg you to and then all you can do is be disagreeable about the past. What is the point? Don't you think everyone looks back on his childhood with some bitterness or regret about something? It doesn't have to ruin your life. You are a big girl now, aren't you tired of it all?... Life marches by, Chelsea. I suggest you get on with it.

Ethel turns and marches up the bank, leaving Chelsea to sit alone, staring at the lake.

89

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

89

Bill is setting the suitcases into the trunk. Norman, Ethel and Billy and Chelsea stand nearby.

ETHEL

Have a wonderful time. And don't worry. Billy will take good care of us.

CHELSEA

Okay.

NORMAN

Don't go getting involved with any foreigners.

CHELSEA

Right.

BILL

(to Billy)

You gonna be all right? *

BILLY

Oh sure. *

(CONTINUED)

89

CONTINUED:

89

BILLY
(hugging Billy)
Behave yourself.

BILLY
Okay. You guys behave, too.

CHELSEA
Okay.

(CONTINUED)

89 CONTINUED

89

She kisses Billy.

BILL

'Bye Norman. Work on your Parchisi game.

NORMAN

Ha, ha, ha.

CHELSEA

Good luck, everybody.

The car drives down the lane, everyone waving. Billy turns to Norman and Ethel.

BILLY

I just want you guys to know I'm not about to take any crap from you.

He heads for the lake. Norman looks at Ethel.

90 EXT. LAKE - DAY,

90

Billy picks up a pine cone and tosses it at a tree. Ethel surveys the situation and opts for something decisive.

ETHEL

All right, gentlemen. It's a beautiful day. We're going fishing.

*
*
*

NORMAN

What? Doing what?

*

ETHEL

Fishing, dear. You remember fishing. Come on, you can show Billy what life is all about on Golden Pond. Come on, Billy.

*
*
*
*

BILLY

Bull --- shit.

ETHEL

(stopping)

Does that mean you can't wait to get out there or it's not your cup of tea?

BILLY

It's bullshit. That's all. I'll do what I want to do when I want to do it. Okay?

*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

90 CONTINUED:

90

ETHEL
 (nodding)
 Come on, Norman. Let's get ready.

She marches up the steps and into the house. Norman follows. He stops.

NORMAN
 You like that word, don't you?
 Bullshit.

BILLY
 Yeah.

NORMAN
 (thinking about it)
 It's a good word.

He continues into the house.

91 INT. MASTER BEDROOM - DAY

91

Norman is making a great production out of donning his old fishing vest, examining himself in the mirror. Ethel has changed her clothes and sits at her vanity, putting on her hat. In her mirror she sees Billy coming up the stairs. *

ETHEL
 (whispering)
 Okay, Grandpa. Do your stuff.

Norman looks from Ethel to the doorway as Billy appears.

NORMAN
 Pretty slick, huh?

Billy shrugs. Norman reaches into the closet, pulls out another smaller fishing vest and throws it on the bed. *

NORMAN
 (continuing)
 Look at this. This was Chelsea's when she was about your age. She caught some pretty respectable fish wearing this. *

BILLY
 I'm surprised you kept it if it's Chelsea's. Since you obviously don't like her. *

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

91 CONTINUED:

91

BILLY

(continuing)

Hey, you know, uh, I might not stick
around here. I might just haul my
ass out to Wyoming or Puerto Rico or
one of those places.

*
*
*

Norman and Ethel share a look.

*

BILLY

(continuing)

Listen, I mean, I know I'm just
being dumped here, which is like
my middle name. You turkeys don't
want me.

*
*
*

NORMAN

Bullshit.

(pause)

I'm 67 years older than you. How
do you know what I want.

BILLY

Well...you didn't say. If you don't
say, how's anybody supposed to know
anything?

Norman stares at him a moment, his feelings hit.

NORMAN

Okay. We're going fishing now.
We want you to go along. If you want
to come with us, I suggest you get your
ass down to the dock in two minutes.
Okay, Mrs. Turkey, let's go.

*

Ethel takes his arm and they walk out of the room.

92 EXT. DOCK - DAY

92

Ethel is sitting in the boat. Norman stands holding
it. He looks up at the house, waiting. He nods when
Billy comes sauntering down, wearing Chelsea's fishing
vest, and carrying one of Norman's hats.

*
*

BILLY

I thought I just might sort of come
along and see what this bullshit is
all about.

*
*

Billy climbs in and Norman starts the motor. Ethel
turns to Billy.

*

(CONTINUED)

92 CONTINUED:

92

ETHEL

You look very handsome in that
vest.

*
*

Billy is embarrassed, but pleased. He pulls the hat
down over his eyes, playing it cool.

*
*

BILLY

How fast does this old tub go
anyway?

*
*
*

Norman scowls at him, then revs the engine. The
Thayer-four zooms away, sending Billy sprawling.
He grins.

*
*
*

BILLY

(continuing)

All right!

*
*

93 OMITTED
thru
96

93
thru
96

97 EXT. LAKE - DAY

97

Norman, Billy, Ethel in the Thayer-four. Norman
has his fishing gear spread before him. Billy
holds a pole, looking almost interested. Norman
hands billy a worm. Ethel holds a parasol and book
and tries to be interested.

NORMAN

All right. Hold this.

Billy takes it, not without some trepidation.

(CONTINUED)

93 INT. CHURCH - DAY 93

A little rustic place, a small crowd of worshippers. The MINISTER is holding forth from his pulpit.

MINISTER

As it was in the beginning, is now
and ever shall be, world without
end, amen.

94 ON THE CONGREGATION 94

A conglomeration of people, in various outfits. Ethel looks appropriately serene, Norman and Billy proportionately less so.

MINISTER (O.S.)

It's a pleasure to see some new
faces among the old faces. I'm
glad some of you still know the
way over here.

Ethel looks at Norman meaningfully. He cringes slightly. Billy smiles. The Minister turns to MISS DARREN, who is a lovely older lady. She stands and begins warbling. The Minister listens rapturously.

95 ANOTHER ANGLE - CONGREGATION - BILLY 95

would love to giggle. It's a challenge to sit through. He catches Norman's eye. Norman scowls at him, then begins to giggle himself. This gets Billy going. Ethel sees what's going on. She smiles herself, then elbows Norman, who elbows Billy.

96 EXT. CHURCH 96

The congregation straggles out. Norman and Ethel pause at the doorway to speak to the Minister. Billy wanders into the yard and begins chucking stones at a tree.

MINISTER

Another summer for the Thayers.
First time we've seen you this year.

NORMAN

Well, Ethel hasn't been feeling
very well.

MINISTER

Oh, I'm sorry.

*
*

(CONTINUED)

96

CONTINUED:

96

He looks compassionately at Ethel, who looks threateningly at Norman.

MINISTER

(continuing)

We all slow down. It's the Lord's way, I guess. You've both had a good full life, God knows.

Norman half-smiles at him.

MINISTER

(continuing)

May I invite you to our little reception at the parsonage?

NORMAN

Nope. You see that kid over there, Reverend? He belongs to my daughter's lover, and we're going to teach him the facts of life this afternoon.

*

MINISTER

(concerned at best)

Oh?

ETHEL

What Norman means is that we're taking the boy fishing. Isn't that right, Norman?

*

Norman looks angelic.

*

NORMAN

Yep. We're going to take the little turkey out and show him something about fishing.

*

MINISTER

(relieved, and impressed)

Oh. Well. God bless you.

NORMAN

Thank you.

97

EXT. LAKE - DAY

97

Norman, Billy, Ethel in the Thayer Four.

(CONTINUED)

97

CONTINUED:

97

Norman has his fishing gear spread before him. Billy holds a pole, looking almost interested. Norman hands Billy a worm. Ethel holds a parasol and book and tries to be interested.

NORMAN

All right. Hold this.

Billy takes it, not without some trepidation.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

97

NORMAN

(continuing)

That's a worm.

BILLY

I guess I know that.

NORMAN

Good. Just don't tell the fish.
As far as they're concerned that's
filet mignon. Now. Put it on
your hook.

Billy thinks about it, then drapes the worm over the
curve of the hook.

NORMAN

(continuing)

This is not going to be easy. Here's
what you do. You start with the
worm's head. You can tell this is
the head because he's smiling at
you, see? And you slowly stick the
hook into the guy's neck and work
it up through the body.

Billy watches, horrified.

BILLY

Gross me out.

98 EXT. LAKE - DAY

98

Norman is busily concentrating on his fishing. Billy
watches him and mimics his demeanor. He sits perfect-
ly still and scowls at the water. Ethel rolls her
eyes impatiently. Norman glares at her incredulously.
Suddenly Billy's pole is bent.

*
*

BILLY

Norman! What's going on!

NORMAN

You've got a bite.

ETHEL

Ooh! A bite! How wonderful!

(CONTINUED)

98

CONTINUED:

98

BILLY

What do you mean?

NORMAN

A fish is biting your worm.

BILLY

No shit. Here.

He passes the pole to Norman, who passes it back to him.

NORMAN

Bring it in. The fish! Bring
it in!

Billy panics. He sets down the pole and begins pulling
in the line, hand over hand.

NORMAN

(continuing)
With the reel, for God's sake!

Now Billy reels in.

BILLY

This is San Frantastic.

He cranks like mad and at last brings out of the water
a small but mighty sunfish.

BILLY

(continuing)
Hey, wow. Look at that. I caught
that. Me. I caught a fish. Can
you believe it?

ETHEL

It's wonderful, Billy. Congratulations.

NORMAN

(unimpressed)
It's only a sunfish.

BILLY

Only a sunfish! This is a beautiful
fish, man. Look at it.

He swings the fish through the air, and hits Norman's
face, a move which goes unappreciated. Norman grabs
the fish, unhooks it and throws it back into the lake.
Billy is horrified.

*
*
*
*

(CONTINUED)

98 CONTINUED: (2)

98

BILLY

What are you doin', man?

NORMAN

I don't allow sunfish in my home.
We're looking for trout, boy. *

Billy looks stricken.

ETHEL

Oh, well, don't worry about it,
dear, there are plenty more where
that one came from. Aren't there,
Norman?

NORMAN

How the hell would I know? I
think we should go in!

ETHEL

Norman...

NORMAN

(firmly)
We'll go in. Now!

He starts reeling in. Billy looks a bit hurt.

ETHEL

Well, there'll be plenty of other
chances to go fishing, won't there,
Norman?

NORMAN

Maybe.

98A. EXT. LAKE - DAWN

98A *

Fish are breaking the surface of the lake in early
morning feeding. *

99 EXT. HOUSE - DAY (EARLY MORNING)

99 *

Norman trudges down to the dock where he's surprised to
find Billy waiting with the boat ready.

BILLY

Let's go, Captain Turkey.
Look out, fish, here we come!

NORMAN

Shhh. You'll wake up the old lady.

But Billy gestures with his head and we SEE Ethel walk down
the bank carrying her sewing basket and her old doll.

(CONTINUED)

99 CONTINUED:

99

NORMAN

(continuing)

Oh, well. Look at you. You're not coming with us, are you?

ETHEL

No. You don't have to worry. You two go on and have a good time, and don't be mean to the fish.

NORMAN

All right. Goodbye, woman.

Norman starts the engine and the boat speeds away from the back.

100 OMITTED

100

101 EXT. DOCK - DAY (MORNING)

101

Ethel sits with Elmer. She watches the boat move in the distance through her binoculars, then begins sewing the doll.

ETHEL

Well, Elmer, looks like we've been deserted.

(she pauses, looks at the doll wistfully)

Remember how we used to sit down here and wait for Dad and watch the fishing boats from Golden Pond Hotel. And they'd ring the bell to call them in for supper. All gone, Elmer. That time is all gone... They say the lake is dying, but I don't believe it... Remember how I used to sit you down here on the dock, Elmer, when I'd head off to Camp Koochakiyi, when I was a little girl? And I'd wave goodbye, and you always waved back, didn't you, Elmer?

(she sings)

I can see the birds
Way up in the sky
From my tent on the bank
Of the lake
At Camp Koochakiyi,
Camp Koochakiyi.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

101 CONTINUED:

101

ETHEL (CONT'D)

(she thinks about
it)

What a terrible song.

102 EXT. LAKE - DAY

102

Billy and Norman sit silently fishing.

BILLY

I don't think there's any trout
in this lake.

Norman stares at the boy, thinking hard.

NORMAN

Can I trust you to keep a
secret?

BILLY

Yeah.

NORMAN

If I take you to a certain place
on this lake where the trout are
humungus, will you promise not
to tell anybody?

BILLY

Who'm I gonna tell?

NORMAN

Promise?

BILLY

Okay. I promise. No bullshit.

NORMAN

All right. Pull up the anchor.

Norman is very serious about this. He sets down his
gear and starts the boat.

103 EXT. LAKE - DAY

103

The Thayer Four cruises along a deserted stretch of
lake, swings in a circle, then stops. Norman looks
about to ensure that no one has followed them. Billy
looks about, too, skeptical.

(CONTINUED)

103 CONTINUED:

103

BILLY

This is it?

NORMAN

This is it.

Norman and Billy prepare to fish.

NORMAN

You have to be patient when you fish for trout boy. There is a trout living in this cove, who weighs ten pounds if he weighs an ounce. I first saw him four or five years ago, and I hooked him two years ago, and last year, too, but he's...

(he yells at the water)

... a crafty old son of a bitch!
(to the bass)

This is your last chance, Walter! I named him Walter because he reminds me of Ethel's brother, because...

(to the fish)

... he's fat and lazy and ugly!

Billy loves all this. Norman nods at him.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Where's your line? Are you on the bottom? If your line's floating you're on the bottom, and that won't do you any good. Bring it up, bring it up, for Christ's sake.

BILLY

Okay, man, don't yell at me! Who do you think you are, Long John Silver?

NORMAN

I'm sorry.

BILLY

It's okay.

They sit for a minute. Norman looks at Billy, searching for something to say.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

You having fun?

BILLY

Yeah.

NORMAN

That's good. Now isn't this better than 'cruising chicks'?

BILLY

No.

NORMAN

No, I suppose not.

(he thinks about it)

You planning on getting married one of these days?

BILLY

No way, Jose. I just want to suck face, man.

Norman nods. He fiddles with his line, thinking he has a bite, deciding he doesn't.

BILLY

(continuing)

How old were you the first time you did it with Ethel?

NORMAN

I beg your pardon? Did what?

BILLY

You know what I'm talking about.

Norman stares at Billy, trying to think of an answer.

NORMAN

It's not a good idea to talk too much out here. Scare the fish away. If the sons of bitches are even here.

Norman looks around, irritated. Suddenly we HEAR the PTT-PUTT of a small outboard MOTOR.

ETHEL (O.S.) WHISTLES a greeting.

Norman and Billy turn to see Ethel approaching in their skiff.

(CONTINUED)

*

*

*

*

103 CONTINUED: (3)

103

NORMAN

For God's sake! What the hell are you doing here?

ETHEL

(holding up a basket)
Shhh... I brought you lunch.

Ethel paddles to them.

NORMAN

How the hell did you find us?

ETHEL

Shhh... you'll scare the fish.

BILLY

(whispering)
This is supposed to be a secret fishing place.

ETHEL

Just a lucky guess.

She smiles and holds out the basket.

NORMAN

We don't need any lunch. We've got more important things going on here.

ETHEL

Take the basket, you poop. Billy might be hungry.

Ethel sets the basket into the boat. *

ETHEL

(continuing)
Have a nice lunch. I'll see you both later.

NORMAN

Goodbye! *

BILLY

Thanks, Ethel.

She starts the motor and moves off. Norman casually opens the basket. *

(CONTINUED)

103

CONTINUED: - (4)

NORMAN

Might as well see what she brought.

The two of them set down their poles and attack the sandwiches voraciously. A moment passes while they feast. Suddenly Norman's pole is bent double and yanked into the air. He lunges and grabs it just in time.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Ah ha. Ah ha! Hold on, you son of a bitch!

We SEE the trout break the water, flipping in the air. *

NORMAN

(continuing)

He's not Walter, but he's related.

(to the fish)

He's an ugly old son of a bitch!

Norman is now standing, reeling like mad. Billy stands, too, thrilled.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Get the net, boy! We're going to have trout for dinner tonight. *

He pulls the large fish out of the water.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Get the net under him. That a boy. *

Billy nets the trout a 3-pounder. *

NORMAN

This is a trout. See? A rainbow trout. *

Norman is genuinely excited. He punches Billy.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Good work, kid.

104 OMITTED

&

105

104
&
105

106 INT. DINING ROOM - DUSK

106 *

Ethel enters with a platter, on which lies the trout all cooked and yummy looking. She sets it down in front of her two tired fishermen.

NORMAN

Well, look what you've done. Look at what this beautiful woman has done, Billy.

BILLY

San frantastic.

ETHEL

Did you boys have a good time out there today?

BILLY

It was a trip.

NORMAN

He's right. It was a trip.

ETHEL

(smiling)

Well, that's good. Isn't it?

107- OMITTED
thru
109

107
thru
109

110 EXT. FLOAT -DAY

110

Billy is perched backwards at the end of the diving board. Norman sits in the canoe nearby. Ethel is swimming a circle around them on an air mattress.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

(rather strongly)

Now go up this time, not just back.
Up and back. Come on.

Billy looks hesitant.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Come on, there's nothing to be
scared of. The back flip is one
of the easiest dives.

BILLY

Then you do it.

Norman looks challenged. He starts peeling off his
shirt.

ETHEL

(from the water)

Norman Thayer, stay where you are!

He scowls at Ethel. Billy loves it. He covers his
mouth and pretends to giggle.

NORMAN

Dive, boy.

Billy does. He goes up all right, but doesn't turn all
the way. He lands rather face-first. He surfaces and
punches the water.

BILLY

Ouch!

(sounding like Norman)

For God's sake!

NORMAN

That wasn't it.

BILLY

Thanks for telling me.

Billy climbs back up on the float. Ethel swims along-
side the canoe.

ETHEL

Norman, we're going to have him for
a month. I don't think you should
kill him the first week.

Norman scowls at her.

110A EXT. HOUSE - LATE AFTERNOON

110A

Norman is sitting on a chair watching Billy clean an enormous plie of fish. Ethel can be seen in the b.g. gathering kindling. They all wear sweaters.

BILLY

We caught eight million fish.
Are you sure none of these is
Walter?

NORMAN

Yep. Watler is humungus! Those
fish you got there are just little
mothas.

BILLY

Well, they're disgusting little
mothas.

NORMAN

You got something against fish
guts boy?

Billy makes a face.

BILLY

Can I ask you something? How did
you get Ethel anyway?

NORMAN

What? I sent away for her. Two
box tops from Quaker Oats.

BILLY

Don't bullshit me man...

NORMAN

I met Ethel when I was a principal
and she was a substitute teacher.
She was about the prettiest thing
I'd ever seen. So I told her she
made my heart go pitter-pat. She
fell in love with me immediately.

Ethel, having overheard the end of Norman's conversa-
tion, moves forward carrying a bunch of kindling.

ETHEL

Hah!...

BILLY

Is that really the way Norman got
you Ethel?

(CONTINUED)

110A CONTINUED:

110A

ETHEL

Don't be silly. Norman didn't get me at all, I won him in a contest. He was the booby prize! Has he got you cleaning those stupid fish?

NORMAN

That's right... he cleans the stupid ones and I clean the smart ones. Fortunately, the smart ones are too smart to get caught. That's why they're in schools... Ha, ha, ha!

Ethel and Billy share a look. She hands Norman the kindling.

ETHEL

Come in Norman and get a fire going. It's going to be a bit nippy tonight.

Norman extends the kindling to Billy.

NORMAN

Do you hear that boy... get a fire going!

ETHEL

For God's sake Norman, Billy doesn't have to do all your chores.

Norman shakes his head as he walks to the house with the wood.

NORMAN

What is the point of having a dwarf if he doesn't do chores?

Ethel now shakes her head and looks at Billy who smiles.

110B INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

110B

Norman is methodically lighting a fire, a pile of newspapers on the hearth beside him. Billy enters carrying a fish bucket as Norman struggles to light a match.

NORMAN

Damn it.

(CONTINUED)

110B CONTINUED:

110B

BILLY

(whispering)

Got the matches backwards. Want me to do it?

NORMAN

I think I know how to light a fire, for Christ's sake!

Billy shrugs. Sets down the bucket and steps onto the porch.

Now Norman has the paper ignited. He fans the fire and stands and watches it with satisfaction. He looks around for Billy. Heads for the porch.

110C EXT. PORCH - LATE AFTERNOON

110C

Billy sits reading as Norman steps out.

NORMAN

What are you reading?

BILLY

(not looking up)

A Tale Of Two Cities.

NORMAN

Ah... Tres bien, tres bien.

Norman looks at Billy for a moment trying to think of something to say. Suddenly, Ethel yells from inside.

ETHEL (O.S.)

Norman, for God's sake! You've set the house on fire!

Pandemonium as Norman and Billy rush inside.

110D INT. LIVING ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

110D

The newspapers on the hearth are ablaze. Ethel is frantically trying to stomp out the flames.

NORMAN

What the hell is going on?

ETHEL

Get a bucket Norman!

(CONTINUED)

110D CONTINUED:

110D

NORMAN

What?

But Billy races by him and grabs the fish bucket. He throws the water and the clean fish onto the fire, extinguishing it.

NORMAN

For God's sake! You made a hell of a mess!

BILLY

What? Don't yell at me man.

ETHEL

(overlapping)

Norman!

NORMAN

I guess it's not safe to have me around here is it?

(he looks to Billy)

What are you staring at me for?
You little son of a bitch!

Billy looks ready to punch him. Instead, he storms out, knocking down the screen door. Norman marches up the stairs, leaving Ethel to look after them both, upset. She bends and returns the fish to the bucket, then steps to the stairway, and calls:

ETHEL

Norman. I'd still appreciate your making a fire when you get a chance.

No answer... She steps outside.

110E OMITTED

110E

110F EXT. DOCK - LATE AFTERNOON

110F *

Billy stands staring at the lake, troubled. Ethel comes down the bank.

ETHEL

You mustn't let Norman upset you, dear.

(CONTINUED)

110F CONTINUED:

110F

BILLY

Sure.

ETHEL

He is not yelling at you... you know.

BILLY

It sounds like he is yelling at me.

ETHEL

No. He is yelling at life.

BILLY

What the heck does that mean?

ETHEL

Well, he's like an old lion. And he has to remind himself that he can still roar.

BILLY

Oh.

ETHEL

Sometimes you have to look hard at a person and remember that he is doing the best he can. He is just trying to find his way. That's all. Just like you.

Billy stands silently for a moment, thinking.

BILLY

Can I take you for a ride, Ethel?

ETHEL

Well, thank you.

111 OMITTED

111

111A EXT. LAKE - LATE AFTERNOON

111A *

Ethel and Billy in the canoe, he paddling stern. They move slowly along in the late sun, a bit raggedly as Billy tries to keep the canoe on course. They paddle in silence for a moment past a rocky shore.

ETHEL

It's beautiful, isn't it?

(CONTINUED)

110F CONTINUED:

110F

BILLY

Sure.

ETHEL

He is not yelling at you...you know.

BILLY

It sounds like he is yelling at me.

ETHEL

No. He is yelling at life.

BILLY

What the heck does that mean?

ETHEL

Well, he's like an old lion. And he has to remind himself that he can still roar.

BILLY

Oh.

ETHEL

Sometimes you have to look hard at a person and remember that he is doing the best he can. He is just trying to find his way.. That's all. Just like you.

Billy stands silently for a moment, thinking.

BILLY

You could come out fishing with us anytime, you know. If you get lonely.

ETHEL

Well, no, I've never liked fishing. It always seemed like the dead fish were staring at me.

BILLY

We don't just fish, you know.

ETHEL

No?

BILLY

Nope. We have a pretty good old time. Norman makes me practice my French, and I make him tell me stories. We've got a real kinetic thing going.

(CONTINUED)

110F CONTINUED:

110F*

ETHEL

That's wonderful.

BILLY

Oh, yeah. And you don't have to worry about him. I keep an eye on him.

Ethel smiles.

111 OMITTED
thru
112

111
thru
112

113 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

113

Norman is fastidiously minding the fire, anything flammable moved well out of danger. He looks at Ethel and Billy, who sit reading.

NORMAN

Um. Did you want to play Parcheesi, or not?...It's all right, we don't have to.

Ethel and Billy look at him, amused.

NORMAN

(continuing)
Unless you want to. It doesn't matter. If you'd rather not play a game. It's not important.

Ethel and Billy look at each other and smile.

ETHEL

Set it up, buster, and prepare to lose your shirt.

113A OMITTED
thru
115

113A
thru
115

116 EXT. GAZEBO - EARLY EVENING

116

~~Ethel is busily crocheting.~~ She feels something and brushes at her neck...then again. We SEE Norman behind the gazebo railing. A mischievous look in his eye and he tickles Ethel with a long piece of grass. She grins.

ETHEL

Oh, Norman. For God's sake.

NORMAN

How is my little Petunia?

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

She looks at him surprised, but pleased. Billy calls from the dock.

BILLY

Hey, I was wondering if I could take a little spin in the Thayer Four.

NORMAN

Absolutely not.

BILLY

I know how to drive.

*
*

ETHEL

I think it would be all right. Don't you, Norman?

NORMAN

Good God! Can you be careful.

BILLY

Oh sure!

He hops into the boat. Norman climbs up over the gazebo rail.

ETHEL

Norman!

Norman sits beside her and puts his arm around her.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Well it has finally happened. You have lost your marbles.

117 EXT. LAKE - EARLY EVENING

Billy drives the Thayer Four away from the house, straight out past the point and out of sight.

117A EXT. LAKE - EARLY EVENING

117A*

Billy drives the boat in great looping circles and figure eights, cutting and weaving, bouncing wildly on the waves, having a marvelous time.

*
*
*118 OMITTED
thru
129118
thru
129

115 CONTINUED:

115

He glances at Billy then looks back at the lake. Billy smiles and stares at Charlie, getting the point but not commenting.

CHARLIE

(continuing)

I just liked the girls.

(he smiles shyly)

Every night after lights out,
you know what they used to do...
go skinny dipping!

*

BILLY

No shit!... Girls are great, Charlie.

(shouting)

They're great! Girls are great!
I love 'em, Charlie. I love the
little nitwits!

*

Charlie laughs.

116 EXT. GAZEBO - EARLY EVENING

116

Ethel is busily crocheting. She feels something and brushes at her neck... then again. We SEE Norman behind the gazebo railing. A mischievous look in his eye as he tickles Ethel with a long piece of grass. She grins.

*

ETHEL

Oh, Norman. For God's sake.

*

NORMAN

How is my little Petunia?

*

She looks at him surprised, but pleased. Billy calls from the dock.

BILLY

Hey, I was wondering if I could
take a little spin in the Thayer
Four.

NORMAN

Absolutely not.

BILLY

Charlie let me drive.

(CONTINUED)

116 CONTINUED:

116

ETHEL

I think it would be all right.
Don't you, Norman?

NORMAN

Good God! Can you be careful.

BILLY

Oh sure!

NORMAN

Stay in our cove boy.

BILLY

Yes sir, I promise.

He hops into the boat. Norman climbs up over the gazebo rail.

ETHEL

Norman!

Norman sits beside her and puts his arm around her.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Well it has finally happened. You
have lost your marbles.

117 EXT. LAKE - EARLY EVENING

117

Billy drives the Thayer Four away from the house,
straight out past the point and out of sight.

118 EXT. GAZEBO - EARLY EVENING

118

Norman and Ethel sit on the bench. Norman leans
forward.

NORMAN

Where the hell is he going?

ETHEL

Tsk. Don't worry about him.

NORMAN

He stole my boat. Thief!

ETHEL

Will you shut up?

- 119 EXT. LAKE - NIGHT 119
 A crystal night, full moon sparkling on the calm water, Billy sits in the Thayer Four not far from the shore of Camp Koochakiyi, binoculars trained on the bank. At last a BELL RINGS and the lights go out in the tents. Billy leans forward.
- 120 EXT. CAMP KOCHAKIYI - NIGHT 120
 Seven or eight young teenage GIRLS creep down the bank and quietly pull off their clothes and jump into the water.
- 121 ON THE BOAT 121
 Billy watches, aging fast; his mouth locked open.
 BILLY
 (whispering)
 Thank you, Charlie Mackinarily.
- 122 ON THE WATER 122
 The girls push and splash each other.
 GIRL #1
 Let's swim out to the boat.
 They start to swim toward the Thayer Four. Billy ducks, terrified. The girls arrive and start to climb aboard. Three of them are aboard before they discover Billy staring transfixed. They shriek and leap into the water and swim, giggling, to the shore as suddenly a light shines on them from the shore. A woman's voice rumbles.
 MISS LOWRY
 (shouting)
 What's going on there? Out of the water and back to your bunks, girls.
 The girls scramble from the water as Miss Lowry trains the flashlight on the Thayer Four.
- 122A ON THE BOAT 122A
 Billy panics... tries desperately to start the engine, which he finally does. He zooms away grinning like a fool.
- 123 OMITTED 123
 thru thru
 126 126
- 127 EXT. PORCH - NIGHT 127
 Newman and Ethel sit at the Parcheesi board as Billy up to the dock and quickly ties up.

(CONTINUED)

127 CONTINUED:

127

NORMAN

I'm too old for this nonsense.
Let's just kill him and get it
over.

128 EXT. YARD - SUNSET

128

Billy moves up the bank and onto the porch.

129 EXT. PORCH - SUNSET

129

NORMAN

Go to your room.

BILLY

Huh?

NORMAN

You go to your room and stay there
for two years.

Ethel looks to the heavens.

BILLY

What. I didn't do anything.

NORMAN

Bullshit. You stole my boat.

BILLY

Oh, come on!

NORMAN

And, you lied.

ETHEL

We were worried about you, Billy.

BILLY

You guys don't have to treat me
like a kid.

NORMAN

Hah! Then you shouldn't act like
one. I have already raised one
ungrateful brat. I'm in no mood
to go through it again.

ETHEL

Norman!

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

*

(CONTINUED)

129 CONTINUED:

129

*

He turns to go. Norman grabs him.

NORMAN

You want to be treated with
respect you have to earn respect.
Do you hear me, boy?

They stare at each other.

BILLY

(mumbling)

I'm sorry.

Billy enters the living room, heads up the stairs.
Ethel elbows Norman and he looks at her. Then calls
to Billy.

NORMAN

Hey. We're glad you're here,
you know. You turkey.

Billy smiles and moves up the stairs. Norman looks
after him, then turns to Ethel. She looks at him,
pleased.

130 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

130

Ethel scowls as Norman loads fishing gear onto an already overburdened Billy.

NORMAN

I'll get the rest...

He picks up a small net and exits. Ethel shakes her head.

ETHEL

You two will be sorry. The loons have been calling for rain all night. 'Rain, rain, send us the rain.'

BILLY

That's what the loons said? Huh?

He smiles and shakes his head. We HEAR NORMAN call:

NORMAN (O.S.)

Allons, debut!

BILLY

Je viens!

(to Ethel)

That's French, you know. It means, 'I'm coming.'

ETHEL

Ah. I'll get la porte.

She carefully opens the screen door and is amazed to discover its hinges are operable.

ETHEL

(continuing)

I don't believe it!

BILLY

Yeah... Norman and I fixed the mutha.

131 EXT. DOCK - DAY

131

Norman waits impatiently in the boat as Ethel and Billy trudge down with their loads. Ethel casts a wary look at the sky.

NORMAN

Hey, boy, grab my chair, would you?

(CONTINUED)

131 CONTINUED

131

ETHEL

Norman. For God's sake, his hands are full.

NORMAN

So? He's got teeth, doesn't he?

ETHEL

Norman, get the chair.

Grumbling, Norman does. He and Billy pile into the boat.

ETHEL

(continuing)

You two be careful out there. And don't be gone long, or you'll miss dinner.

*
*

NORMAN

Then we'll just have to eat raw fish like the Orientals do.

(to Billy)

Of course you'll never get any taller.

(to Ethel)

Goodbye, woman.

*
*
*
*
*

BILLY

Goodbye, woman.

They motor away from the dock.

132 EXT. LAKE - LATE AFTERNOON

132

The sky is growing dark as the Thayer-four cuts across the water. Norman stops the boat at the entrance to a rocky cove.

*
*
*

NORMAN

This is about the only place we haven't looked for this stupid son a bitch fish. We might as well give it a try, huh?

*
*
*
*
*

He turns the boat and slowly maneuvers into the cove.

*

NORMAN

(continuing)

They call this Purgatory Cove, boy. See those rocks? They eat boats.

*
*
*

132 CONTINUED

132

Billy looks around skeptically.

BILLY

Do you know the way?

NORMAN

Of course I know the way. I've been on this lake 48 years, for Christ's sake. Now you get up on the deck and tell me where the rocks are.

Billy does, with some trepidation. Norman moves the boat forward slowly and carefully.

BILLY

Um. There's a rock coming up, Norman!

NORMAN

Which side?

BILLY

Uh, right!

NORMAN

Starboard, boy.

BILLY

Okay, starboard.

Norman turns the boat.

BILLY

Another one. On the left. Um. Shit. Port!

Norman turns the boat. Now they are into the cove. WE SEE rocks breaking the surface, or lying green and ominous just below. The boat zig zags along as Billy shouts directions.

BILLY

Port! Port. Starboard. No, port!

At last they reach the center of the cove, and Norman cuts the motor.

NORMAN

Now doesn't this look like the ideal hiding place for a
(he shouts)
crafty old son of a bitch?

132 CONTINUED

132

Billy looks around at the cove, still and eerie looking in the fading light.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Well? The fish aren't going to just jump up into the boat, you know. Get it in gear, turkey.

Billy readies his fish pole. He and Norman sit fishing quietly, reflecting the somberness of the weather. Norman looks at the sky pensively.

NORMAN

(continuing)

It's getting dark, Chelsea.

BILLY

Who you calling Chelsea? I'm Billy. Come on, man.

Norman looks at him, nods.

BILLY

(continuing)

Are you okay?

NORMAN

Of course I'm okay.

BILLY

Okay. We better hurry up and catch Walter, huh? I'm not going to be here much longer.

NORMAN

Neither am I.

BILLY

I'll miss you, Norman.

NORMAN

What?

BILLY

Life really sucks sometimes, doesn't it?

They grow quiet again, each lost in his thoughts. Billy idly cranks his reel and feels something pulling on his line.

BILLY

(continuing)

Norman! Shit! I got the mutha!
I got him!

He cranks like mad, while Norman watches.

BILLY

(continuing)

Get the net, Norman! Get it in
gear, turkey!

Norman grabs the net. He stands by while Billy excitedly reels in, struggling with his catch. He peers over the side.

BILLY

(continuing)

What the heck is that?

Billy reaches into the water and pulls out the body of a loon, obviously dead for some time.

BILLY

(continuing)

Good God. It's a dead loon,
Norman. The poor thing.
(he makes a face)
Phew! It stinks, too.

But he stands staring at it, fascinated.

NORMAN

Put it back.

BILLY

What? It's dead.

NORMAN

Put it back.

Billy carefully drops the bird into the water, and watches it float away from the boat. Norman returns to his own end of the Thayer-four, and sits silently. Billy seems shaken by what's happened. The sky grows steadily darker.

BILLY

(quietly)

Norman, are you afraid of dying?

NORMAN

What?

BILLY

(persisting)

Are you afraid to die?

NORMAN

What the hell kind of question
is that?

BILLY

I was just wondering, that's all.

NORMAN

(muttering)

Well, I don't know why everybody
has to talk about everything all
the time .

He stares at the water, looks up at the sky, then back
at Billy. He smiles.

NORMAN

Let's go home, boy.

He reels in, and pulls up the anchor. Billy reels in,
and looks around nervously as the darkness closes in.

BILLY

Are you sure we're going to be
able to get out of here?

NORMAN

What? Of course we are. Now
get on the deck.

Norman starts the motor and looks at Billy, who moves
reluctantly onto the deck. Norman senses Billy's fear.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Hey. Get back here. I forgot
you're a hot shot boat driver.
You take the wheel and I'll
navigate.

BILLY

Yeah?

He climbs back into the boat as Norman pulls himself
onto the deck.

132 CONTINUED:

132

BILLY

(continuing)

I'm not afraid, you know.

NORMAN

I know. Now you just take us
real slow and do what I tell
you.

Billy moves the boat forward. Norman points as he
gives commands.

NORMAN

(continuing)

All right. Starboard. Go port.
That a boy. Good. Now. The
other way. Very good. Okay.
Starboard again.

The boat zig zags along. The visibility gets worse
and worse, and Norman has to squint at the darkness,
struggling to see the way.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Port, Billy. Port! Good boy.

Suddenly ahead of the boat there looms a whole series
of rocks, with seemingly no passageway.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Good God! Reverse! Full throttle
in reverse!

Billy panics. He hits the throttle in forward, and the
boat races ahead.

NORMAN

(continuing)

Reverse!

But it's too late. The boat slams into a rock, sending
Norman flying into the water. Billy hits the windshield
and is thrown back as the Thayer-four rolls onto its
side. WE SEE a huge gash on the bottom. Water pours
through it, as the grand old boat quickly fills and starts
to sink. Norman splashes in the water, bleeding
profusely from a scalp wound. *
*

NORMAN

Chelsea! Chelsea!

(CONTINUED)

132 CONTINUED:

132

Billy swims toward Norman, calling.

BILLY
Norman! Norman!

At last he reaches Norman. He grabs him.

BILLY
(continuing)
Norman! I screwed up. I'm sorry.

But Norman is in no condition for conversation. His face is covered with blood from the gash in his scalp. He looks at Billy, then closes his eyes. Billy pulls him through the water, looking for safety. Norman is clearly too heavy for the boy, but Billy forges on. At last he spots a rock jutting out of the water, jagged and slippery. He drags Norman to it, and tries to push him onto it, but Norman is practically deadweight, and it takes all of Billy's remaining strength to force Norman onto the rock. Billy shakes him. *

BILLY
Come on, Norman. You gotta live, man.

Billy is crying. He slides back into the water, exhausted. Norman lies still for a moment, then finally begins to regain his senses. He hears splashing near him as Billy struggles to stay above water.

NORMAN
Billy? Billy?

He drops into the water, hanging onto the rock, and he reaches for the boy. With a great lunge he grabs Billy and pulls him back to the rock, and holds him there.

133 OMITTED
thru
143

133
thru
143

143A EXT. MARINA-- DUSK

143A

Ethel's car screeches to a halt. She jumps out.

143B INT. CHARLIE'S BOATHOUSE - DUSK

143B

Charlie is tinkering with a motor at his workbench as Ethel enters.

ETHEL
Come on, Charlie, we're going for a boat ride.

CHARLIE
Huh?

(CONTINUED)

143B CONTINUED:

143B

ETHEL

They're out on the lake. They should have been back before dark. Let's go!

She heads across the boathouse to Charlie's boat moored in its slip. Charlie grabs his slicker and follows her. They climb into the boat and move off.

144 EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

144

Billy and Norman cling to each other, and to the rock, both exhausted.

145 EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

145

Charlie's boat clips across the lake, Ethel shining a spotlight back and forth across the water. Charlie stops the boat.

CHARLIE

Ethel, we've been back and forth here three times. They must have pulled up somewhere.

Ethel peers into the darkness. She shines the light on the entrance to Purgatory Cove.

ETHEL

You don't think he went in there, do you?

CHARLIE

He's not that crazy.

ETHEL

Yes, he is. Let's go.

CHARLIE

I'm not going to drive my boat into Purgatory Cove.

ETHEL

Then I'll drive. Here; Hold this.

She thrusts the spotlight into his hands, and takes the wheel. The boat moves carefully into the cove.

146 EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

146

Billy and Norman are now on opposite sides of the rock, arms interlocked.

(CONTINUED)

146 CONTINUED:

146

BILLY

Maybe I should try swimming to shore.

Norman shakes his head, too tired to answer. Billy grips him tighter.

147 EXT. LAKE - NIGHT

147

Ethel steers the boat past the rocks, while Charlie tries to find them with his light.

CHARLIE

Left, Ethel. Now right! Oh, my God.

He can barely watch, but the boat winds along. Suddenly they hit something.

CHARLIE

(continuing)

Uh, oh.

He shines the line on the water.

CHARLIE

Holy Mackinoly.

WE SEE a section of the Thayer-four floating in the water. Ethel sees it too. She shouts.

ETHEL

Norman Thayer! Where the hell are you?

Ethel maneuvers forward, and Charlie slowly passes the light across the path. A dark mass looms ahead of them. Ethel brings the boat closer and WE SEE Norman and Billy just barely hanging onto the rock.

ETHEL

There they are. Take the wheel, Charlie.

She suddenly jumps into the water, and swims to the rock.

NORMAN

(weakly)

Ethel. You shouldn't be out here in this sort of weather.

(CONTINUED)

147 CONTINUED:

147

She hugs him to her. She pulls Billy up and hugs
him, too.

*
*

ETHEL

You poops. You goddam poops.

*

Charlie maneuvers his boat alongside.

*

148 OMITTED
thru
164

148*
thru
164

165 EXT. LAKE - DAWN

165

Golden Pond is calm. The morning sun glistens on
the water.

166 OMIT 166
 167 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY 167

Norman and Billy sit at a table concentrating on a jigsaw puzzle. Norman wears a small bandage on his forehead. Ethel steps in from the kitchen carrying her berry buckets.

ETHEL

I'm off to get some berries. Will you two be all right?

They appear too busy to respond other than to nod or wave her off. She nods.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Bye, then.

She exits through the kitchen. As soon as the back door slams, Billy and Norman spring into action. They grab fishing vests and hats and gear, and scramble out the door.

168 OMIT 168
 169 EXT. DOCK - DAY 169

Billy and Norman rush down the bank to the dock until they are stopped dead in their tracks by Ethel's voice.

ETHEL (O.S.)

Hey!

Billy and Norman look up innocently as Ethel approaches.

ETHEL

And where are you juvenile delinquents off to?

Billy and Norman smile stupidly at her.

ETHEL

(continuing, to Norman)

I thought you were in too much pain to exert yourself.

NORMAN

What? Well, I am. I'm only doing this for Billy - give the poor boy another chance to catch a fish. We've been doing goddam jigsaw puzzles for a week.

(CONTINUED)

169 CONTINUED:

169

ETHEL

Mm-hmm. You'll be staying in
our cove, won't you?

NORMAN

Tsk. There are no trout left in
our cove.

ETHEL

We have enough trout in the
fridge to last us six years.

BILLY

But we don't have Walter.

NORMAN

Never mind. We'll stay in the
damn cove.

Norman steps to her and grabs her, and kisses her.

170 EXT. BLUEBERRY HILL - DAY

170

High above the lake. Ethel stands, picking berries.
After a moment she begins to sing.

ETHEL

I can see the trees and the
hills beyond,
from my tent on the bank
of the lake called Golden Pond,
On Golden Pond.

171 EXT. ROAD - DAY

171

A car rounds a bend and stops. Chelsea steps out and
breathes in the warm air. She stares down at the
lake, looking more buoyant than we've seen her. She
HEARS ETHEL'S VOICE and moves toward her, intrigued.

172 EXT. BLUEBERRY HILL - DAY

172

Ethel is dancing a little Indian dance.

ETHEL

We are the girls from Camp
Koochakiyi,
you can tell who we are by
the gleam in our eyes.
Our minds are clear
and our hearts are strong,
we are dancing here but we
won't be long...

Chelsea climbs down quickly behind her. Ethel's dance
grows.

ETHEL

(continuing)

There will soon be deer
where there are now fawns,
And we'll remember our years
on Golden Pond...

Chelsea joins in.

CHELSEA AND ETHEL

On Golden Pond.

Ethel turns, startled.

CHELSEA

(continuing)

How.

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL

How did you get here?

CHELSEA

I rented a car. A Volare.
Made by Plymouth.

Chelsea looks at Ethel then at her jacket. *

CHELSEA *

Look at you. You've had that
coat as long as I can remember. *

ETHEL *

Looks it, doesn't it? *

CHELSEA *

It looks great. *

Chelsea and Ethel hug each other. *

ETHEL *

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

CHELSEA *

You look different. *

ETHEL *

You mean old. Like my coat. *

CHELSEA *

I don't know. *

ETHEL *

That's what happens if you live
long enough. You get old. *

CHELSEA *

How does it make you feel? *

ETHEL *

Well, it doesn't make me feel
like jumping up and down. *

CHELSEA *

It makes me goddamn mad! *

ETHEL *

They're not digging my grave yet.
Well, how was your trip? *

CHELSEA *

Not bad.

(CONTINUED)

ETHEL

Ah.

CHELSEA

How's the kid? Still got him or
did you drown him?

ETHEL

We still got him. He's right out
there fishing with his best buddy.
You can see them.

Chelsea peers out at the lake, a wistful look in her eyes.

CHELSEA

Where's the Thayer-four?

ETHEL

Oh, Charlie's fixing it. Norman
and Billy tried to drive it through
a rock in Purgatory Cove.

CHELSEA

Did they get hurt?

ETHEL

Norman got a bump on his forehead,
which he's been playing to the hilt,
but they're both fine, thank God.
Do you still have Bill or did you
drown him? *

CHELSEA

Still got him. But he had to get
back to the coast. He had a mouth
that needed looking into.

(she smiles)

Have Norman and Billy gotten along
all right?

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED : (2)

172

ETHEL

Billy is the happiest thing that's happened to Norman since Roosevelt. I should have rented him a 13-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 a very nice daughter.

CHELSEA

Isn't that cute the way they're so buddy-buddy? How come it's so easy?

ETHEL

What do you mean?

CHELSEA

Why wasn't the old son of a bitch ever my friend?

ETHEL

You're sounding very childish. Of course he was your friend ... he's your father.

CHELSEA

I like your logic, but it's bullshit!

ETHEL

Oh, dear. You're such a nice person, can't you think of anything nice to say?

CHELSEA

Um. I married Bill in Brussels.

ETHEL

You did what in Brussels?

CHELSEA

I married Bill.

ETHEL

Does it count in this country?

(CONTINUED)

172 CONTINUED: (3)

172

CHELSEA

Fraid so.

ETHEL

(hugging her)

Well, bless you. Congratulations.

CHELSEA

Nothing to it.

ETHEL

Norman will be so pleased.

CHELSEA

Yeah, right. What do you think he's going to say, "Hey, Chelsea, fantastic. I'm so glad you're finally getting your life together, and I'm so proud of you?"

ETHEL

I doubt it, but he will be happy for you.

CHELSEA

No, he won't. You know why? Because he doesn't really care. He cares about Norman Thayer, Jr, but he doesn't care about me ... and he doesn't care about you either. He's a selfish son of a bitch!
(she yells at the lake)
You old son of a bitch!

Ethel, stunned by all this, slaps Chelsea's face.

ETHEL

That old son of a bitch happens to be my husband.

Now Chelsea is stunned. She turns and runs headlong down the hill.

173 EXT. WOODS - DAY

173

Chelsea runs along the shore. She reaches a little point of land, runs onto a huge rock, and flings herself into Golden Pond.

174 EXT. LAKE - DAY

174

Chelsea stays under the water for a moment, then surfaces, spitting out a spray of water.

CHELSEA

Well, shit.

175 OMITTED

175

175A EXT. LAKE - DAY

175A

Billy is struggling to reel in his line. Norman watches skeptically.

BILLY

Shit! Oh, wow, man!

NORMAN

It's only a sunfish, don't get excited.

BILLY

This is only a sunfish? It's doing a pretty good trout impression. Get the net!

NORMAN

Are you doubting the word of a genius? There are no respectable trout in this cove. I chased them out years ago.

At which point the fish breaks the water, a huge trout.

BILLY

What is that then?

NORMAN

That is a trout.
(he scrambles for the net)
Good God! It's Walter! What the hell are you doing here, you son of a bitch?

He scoops the fish into the net, and he and Billy fall over each other landing the fish on the boat's floor.

BILLY

We caught Walter!

NORMAN

We caught Walter. The son of a bitch!

176 OMITTED

176

176A EXT. DOCK - DAY

176A

Chelsea is sitting on the dock, hair and shorts still wet, shoes gone. She looks at the lake through binoculars. She lowers the glasses as Ethel steps onto the dock. An awkward moment passes.

ETHEL

I brought your car.

CHELSEA

Thank you.

(after a moment)

I'm sorry.

ETHEL

I'm sorry, too. But you're wrong, you know. Your father does care. Deeply. It's true he's an absolute mutt when it comes to telling anybody, but I know he'd walk through fire for me, and he would for you, too. And if you can't see that, then you're not looking close enough.

CHELSEA

(after a beat)

I don't even know him.

ETHEL

Well, he'll be here in a minute, I'll be glad to introduce you.

CHELSEA

Right. Maybe someday we can try to be friends.

ETHEL

Chelsea, Norman is 80 years old. He has heart palpitations and a problem remembering things. When exactly do you expect this friendship to begin?

CHELSEA

I don't know. I'm afraid of him.

ETHEL

Well, he's afraid of you. You should get along fine.

(she pauses)

Here he comes. Talk to him.

She turns and marches up the bank, leaving Chelsea to gaze nervously out as Norman's boat approaches the dock.

177
thru
178

OMITTED

177
thru
178

Chelsea is wading in the shallow water, studying the little pebbles that glisten in the sun. She looks up as Billy and Norman approach the dock. Billy spots Chelsea. He jumps from the boat to the dock, and smiles at her. She looks at Billy in surprise. He seems taller, his posture improved, his face ruddy. They look at each other a moment, then he jumps into the water. He and Chelsea embrace.

BILLY

Look at you.

CHELSEA

Hi, kid.

BILLY

Where's the dentist?

CHELSEA

He had to go back. He'll call you tonight. Hello, Norman.

NORMAN

(sitting in the
boat)

Well, well, well.

BILLY

Chelsea, we caught Walter! Do you know who Walter is?

CHELSEA

I have a feeling he's a fish.

BILLY

Yes. A humungus fish. And we caught him! We caught him!

CHELSEA

Well? Let me see him.

NORMAN

We let him go.

BILLY

Yeah, we let him go.

CHELSEA

I think I've heard this story before.

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED:

179

BILLY

No, it's true. We figures if he's lived this long we should let him keep on living.

He climbs up the bank.

BILLY

(continuing)

I've got to tell Ethel we caught him.
(he grins at Norman)
We caught the son of a bitch!

Billy runs off. Chelsea looks at Norman. She has to squint in the bright sun.

CHELSEA

Got yourself a friend, huh?

NORMAN

He's all right. It hasn't been too difficult.

He starts to climb out of the boat.

CHELSEA

How's your forehead? *

NORMAN

What? This? *

(he touches the bandage)

Oh, not too bad. A lot of pain,
nothing to worry about. *

CHELSEA

Norman, I want to talk to you. *

NORMAN

(sitting back down)

What seems to be the problem? *

CHELSEA

There's no problem. I just...want to talk to you. I, um...I was thinking, it occurred to me that maybe you and I should have the kind of relationship we're supposed to have.

NORMAN

What kind of relationship is that?

CHELSEA

Well, you know, like a father and a daughter.

NORMAN

Oh. Just in the nick of time, huh?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED: (2)

179

NORMAN (CONT'D)

Worried about the will, are you?
I'm leaving everything to you,
except what I'm taking with me.

CHELSEA

Oh, stop it. I don't want anything.
It just seems like you and I have
been mad at each other for too long.

NORMAN

Oh? I didn't know we were mad,
I thought we just didn't like
each other.

This hits Chelsea hard enough. She wades a little
deeper, trying to regroup.

CHELSEA

I want to be your friend.

NORMAN

(hit himself)

Oh. Does this mean you might come
around more often? It would mean
a lot to your mother.

CHELSEA

I'll come around more often.

Norman nods. Chelsea nods. They both work at not looking
at each other. *

NORMAN *

Well ... *

CHELSEA *

Yep. Oh. Yeah. By the way, I
got married in Brussels. *

NORMAN *

You did? In Brussels? Ah ha. *

CHELSEA *

Yes. It's the best thing that's
ever happened to me. He makes me
very happy. *

NORMAN *

Well, good. Does he speak English? *

CHELSEA *

Tsk. I married Bill. *

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED: (3)

179

NORMAN

Bill? Oh, Bill! Ah.
(he thinks about it,
smiles at her)
Well. I'm glad, Chelsea. That's
um ... San Frantastic.

CHELSEA

(surprised)

What?

NORMAN

Billy going to live with you?

CHELSEA

Yes.

NORMAN

Good. Isn't that something?
Good for you.

He smiles at her. A moment passes.

NORMAN

Oh, you know, I've got him
doing a back flip. Just like
a pro.

CHELSEA

Oh, yeah? That's great.

NORMAN

You want me to get him down here
and show you?

CHELSEA

Um, no thanks, not right now.

NORMAN

Okay. Oh, that's right, you
never were a great back-flipper,
were you?

CHELSEA

No, I was never a great one.
I was too fat, remember?

NORMAN

(laughing)

Ha, ha, yes I do remember that now.
Oh, well, I guess it's probably
easier for a boy anyway.

CHELSEA

I beg your pardon? Would you
like to see me do a back flip?

(CONTINUED)

179 CONTINUED: (4)

179

Chelsea starts heading out toward the float.

NORMAN

What?

CHELSEA

I'm going to do a goddam back flip.

Now she swims. Norman watches confused.

NORMAN

Chelsea, you don't have to ...

CHELSEA

(interrupting)

I want to do it. It's part of my growing-up process. Come on, coach, let's go.

She swims to the raft. Norman turns the boat and rows after her.

180 EXT. FLOAT - DAY

180

Chelsea stands on the diving board, back to the water, looking intense, and scared. Norman sits in the boat near her.

NORMAN

Be sure to go up and not just back. Up and back.

Chelsea looks at him, a little girl.

CHELSEA

I'm scared.

NORMAN

There's nothing to be scared of. The back flip is one of the easiest dives of all.

180 CONTINUED:

180

CHELSEA

But I'm scared anyway.

NORMAN

Then don't do it. It doesn't matter if you don't do the stupid dive. It's not important.

Chelsea stares at him, hearing the message she would have liked to hear 30 years ago. She half smiles, and then throws herself up and back and does a flip. Not perfect, but passable.

After a moment, she surfaces, amazed at herself. Norman stands in the boat and claps. He shouts at the house.

NORMAN

She did it! Chelsea did a back flip!

181 EXT. PORCH

181

Ethel and Billy stand clapping.

182 EXT. HOUSE - DAY

182

Chelsea, Ethel and Billy stand by Chelsea's car.

CHELSEA

You could come out, you know. Instead of going to Florida.

ETHEL

Well, we'll discuss it. If I can get Norman to accept the fact that Los Angeles is part of the United States, it shouldn't be too much trouble.

They turn as Norman marches out carrying a fish pole.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Norman, what are you doing now?

(CONTINUED)

182

CONTINUED:

NORMAN

(handing the pole to Billy)
Here, cool breeze. In case you
want to take a break from cruising.

BILLY

Wow. Thank you, Captain.

ETHEL

Norman, he can't take that stupid
thing on the plane.

CHELSEA

Yes, he can.

Norman looks at Chelsea gratefully.

NORMAN

I've got something for you, too.

He fishes in his pocket and pulls out a medal, which he
hangs around Chelsea's neck.

NORMAN

(continuing)

You know what this is?

CHELSEA

Yes.

NORMAN

University of Pennsylvania diving
finals-- 1921. Second place...

CHELSEA

Thank you.

(she's touched)

Now I can retire.

NORMAN

Show it to your new husband. Maybe
he'll give us a discount on dental work.

Billy shakes Norman's hand.

BILLY

I'll see ya, ya nitwit.

NORMAN

Okay.

Billy hugs him, which is a shock to Norman, but he hugs
him, too. Billy steps to Ethel.

BILLY

Well, goodbye, woman.

They embrace.

ETHEL

Goodbye, dear.

Chelsea stands by Norman.

(CONTINUED)

182 CONTINUED: (3)

182

CHELSEA

Um. 'Bye. Norman. Dad.

With a what-the-hell, Norman grabs and hugs her, too.

183 INT. LIVING ROOM - NIGHT

183

Norman watches as Ethel packs up the Parchisi game.

NORMAN

What are you, quitting? Let's play 'Loser drives home'.

ETHEL

Tsk. You owe me four million dollars.

NORMAN

Double or nothing.

She smiles, shakes her head. She puts the board back down and sits across from Norman. They look like two gunfighters ready to square off.

184 EXT. SHORE - DAY

184

Norman watches Charlie haul up the last section of dock.

CHARLIE

Unnh. Well. Another summer, huh, Norman?

NORMAN

Yep. Now wait a minute. You better get that section all the way up the bank.

Charlie shakes his head and strains to lift the thing higher. Norman waves him on.

NORMAN

(continuing)

That's it, come on. I don't want to get back here next year and find out my damn dock has floated away. That's a good boy.

(CONTINUED)

184 CONTINUED:

184

Charlie wipes his brow. He climbs into his boat.

CHARLIE

We'll see you next summer, Norman.

NORMAN

Okay, Charlie. You take care of yourself.

CHARLIE

You bet.

He starts the motor and roars off. Norman stands watching Charlie's boat skim across the water.

ETHEL (O.S.)

Norman. Come on, dear.

He turns and walks up the bank.

185 EXT. PORCH - Day

185

Ethel is on the porch. There are two boxes beside her.

ETHEL

Let's get these last boxes to the car and be gone.

NORMAN

Oh, for God's sake.

He starts to lift one box, she takes the other.

ETHEL

It's not too heavy, is it?

NORMAN

Of course it's not too heavy.
Good God, this is heavy!

(he takes a
few steps)

You're trying to kill me.

ETHEL

I've thought about it. Put it down if it's too much trouble.

NORMAN

What the hell do you have in here?

ETHEL

My mother's china. Put it down, Norman.

(CONTINUED)

NORMAN

Your mother never liked me.

He's clearly in pain.

ETHEL

Of course she did. Put the box
down. Dammit!

He drops the box with a terrible crash. Norman falls
down after it. Ethel drops her box and rushes to help
him. He lies clutching himself as she holds him to her.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Oh, my God. Norman! Where's your
medicine? Oh God!

She rushes to the back of the house. Norman lies still,
gasping in pain. Ethel runs back. She wrestles with
the medicine bottle.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Whoever designed these caps is
a madman.

At last she has it open. She cradles Norman's head.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Here. Put this under your tongue.

NORMAN

What is it?

ETHEL

Nitroglycerin. Put it under your
tongue.

NORMAN

You must be mad. I'll blow up.

ETHEL

Do it, dammit.

He does. She watches as he closes his eyes.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Dear God, don't take him now. You
don't want him, he's a poop.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

185 CONTINUED:

185

ETHEL (CONT'D)

Norman? Norman!

NORMAN

(his eyes closed)

Maybe you should call a doctor.
We can afford it.

ETHEL

(jumping up)

Oh, yes. I should have done that.
Dear God.

She rushes onto the porch and into the house.

186 INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

186

The furniture is all stacked and covered again. Ethel
finds the telephone and dials "0".

ETHEL

Hello, hello. Dear God.

She steps back out the door, carrying the phone.

187 EXT. PORCH - DAY

187

ETHEL

How are you feeling, Norman?

NORMAN

Oh, pretty good. How are you?

ETHEL

How's the pain, dammit?

NORMAN

Pretty good, as pain goes.

ETHEL

Is the medicine doing anything?

NORMAN

No.

ETHEL

Why don't they answer the phone?

NORMAN

Who'd you call?

ETHEL

The stupid operator. Hello? Hello,
hello, hello, hello, hello, hello!
Whatever is the matter with her?

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED :

187

NORMAN

She's slow.

ETHEL

How do you feel now?

NORMAN

I don't know.

ETHEL

Are you planning to die? Is that what you're up to? Well, while I'm waiting for this moron to answer the phone, let me say something to you, Norman Thayer, Junior. I would rather you didn't.

NORMAN

Really?

ETHEL

Yes! This stupid, stupid woman. I'm going to have to call the hospital directly.

(she heads back to the door, muttering)

The phone book, where's the phone book?

NORMAN

Ethel?

ETHEL

(fearing the worst)

Yes. What is it?

NORMAN

Come here.

Ethel drops the phone, rushes to him, kneels by him.

ETHEL

Oh, God. Yes, Norman, my darling.

NORMAN

Ethel.

ETHEL

Yes. I'm here, Norman.

NORMAN

Ethel.

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED : (2)

187

ETHEL

Yes, yes, yes.

NORMAN

Ethel.

ETHEL

What is it?

NORMAN

Ethel. I think I'm feeling all right now.

ETHEL

Oh, God.

(she clutches him
to her)

Are you serious?

NORMAN

My heart stopped hurting. Maybe I'm dead.

ETHEL

Oh, Norman. Oh, thank God. I love you so much.

NORMAN

Now my heart's starting to hurt again. Sorry about you mother's china.

ETHEL

Why did you strain yourself? You know better.

(CONTINUED)

187 CONTINUED: (3)

187 *

NORMAN

I was showing off. Trying to turn you on.

ETHEL

Well, you succeeded. There's no need for you to try that sort of thing again.

NORMAN

Good.

She holds him and they don't move for a long time. She gazes out at the lake.

187A ON THE LAKE

187A*

The lake looks more golden than ever, with dabs of yellow and red reflecting in the water.

ETHEL (O.S.)

Norman. This is the first time I've really felt we're going to die.

NORMAN (O.S.)

I've known it all along.

187B ON NORMAN AND ETHEL

187B*

ETHEL

When I looked at you lying on the ground I could actually see you dead. I could see you in your blue suit and a white starched shirt, lying in Thomas' Funeral Parlor on Bradshaw Street.

NORMAN

How did I look?

ETHEL

Not good, Norman. You've been talking about dying ever since I met you. But today was the first time I've really felt it.

NORMAN

How does it feel?

(CONTINUED)

187B CONTINUED:

187B *

ETHEL

It feels... Odd. Cold, I guess.
But not that bad, really. Almost
comforting, not so frightening,
not such a bad place to go. I
don't know.

She looks at him, looks away. He reaches up and pulls
her head to him. She smiles at him, leans against
him. After a moment he pulls himself up.

NORMAN

Well? Don't you want to say
goodbye to the lake?

ETHEL

Are you sure you're strong enough?

NORMAN

I think so. If I fall over face
first in the water, you'll know
I wasn't.

ETHEL

Well, be careful, for God's sake.
I'm only good for one near miss
a day.

He steps to her, takes her in his arms.

NORMAN

Hello, there.

ETHEL

Hi.

NORMAN

Want to dance? Or would you
rather just suck face?

ETHEL

You really are a case, you know.

They move down to the water's edge. The LOONS CALL.

ETHEL

(continuing)

Norman! The loons! They've come
'round to say goodbye.

NORMAN

How nice.

188 ON THE LAKE

188

The two loons light on the water for a moment, then rise again and soar away.

189 ON NORMAN AND ETHEL

189

They watch the loons.

ETHEL

Just the two of them now. Little baby's all grown up and moved to Los Angeles or somewhere.

NORMAN

Yes.

ETHEL

Hello, Golden Pond. We've come to say goodbye.

They stare out at the lake. The CAMERA DRAWS BACK and we SEE Norman and Ethel, like the last summer flowers on the shore. Solitary figures. Not sad, but peaceful and hopeful and proud. The CAMERA DRAWS BACK, AWAY, ABOVE them. They become smaller and smaller, but still visible and bright on the golden pond.

FADE OUT.

- THE END -