

takes the bag into the kitchen.)

NORMAN. Spoilsport. *(To Billy.)* Oh, well. We can always eat raw fish the way the Orientals do.

BILLY. Bleccch.

NORMAN. Of course you may never get any taller. Got a book with you?

BILLY. Yes. *(He doesn't, but he crosses quickly to the shelves and pulls down a book.) A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court.*

NORMAN. Ah. *(Ethel returns with a different bag, a larger canvas one, full to the top. She hangs it around Billy's neck.)*

ETHEL. You'll find a few cookies in there, and some biscuits, along with two tuna-fish sandwiches each, a thermos of milk, and a nice jar of fresh raspberries, just picked.

BILLY. Smooth move.

NORMAN. Right on, cool breeze. That's jive talk, Ethel.

ETHEL. That's nice. *(The boys head for the upstage door.)*

NORMAN. Goodbye, woman. Hold it! Where's my chair? I can't fish without my chair.

BILLY. It's in the back by the picnic table.

NORMAN. What's it doing there?

BILLY. You were sitting on it yesterday while you watched me clean the fish.

NORMAN. Ohhh.

ETHEL. Tsk. Has he been making you clean those stupid fish?

BILLY. Yeah.

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

ETHEL. Oh, Lord.

BILLY. *(To Norman.)* You're really becoming a nitwit, aren't you?

NORMAN. A nitwit? Hear that, Ethel? This poor child is starting to talk like an old lady. Get my chair, boy!

ETHEL. Norman, his hands are full.

BILLY. That's right, my hands are full.

NORMAN. So? You've got teeth, don't you?

ETHEL. Norman, get the chair.

NORMAN. Good God!

ETHEL. Poor Billy ends up doing all your chores.

NORMAN. What's the point of having a dwarf if he doesn't do chores? *(He kisses Ethel with great flair and exits. She shakes her head, exasperated but secretly pleased. She piles the gear back onto Billy.)*

BILLY. You could come with us, you know.

ETHEL. No, thank you, I've never liked fishing. I used to go with my father and brother. It always seemed as if the dead fish were staring at me.

BILLY. I know what you mean. But I like fishing.

ETHEL. I'm awfully glad. I know Norman loves having you go.

BILLY. Oh, yeah, we have a lot of fun. We don't just fish, you know.

ETHEL. No?

BILLY. Nope. We make good use of our time. Norman makes me practice my French, and I make him tell me stories from the old days. Sometimes he calls me Chelsea.

ETHEL. Oh. Well, you probably remind him of her in some ways.

BILLY. Yeah. I always say, "Norman, you know I'm not Chelsea; I'm Billy

NORMAN. *(Offstage.)* Hey! Allons! Debut!

BILLY. *(Calling.)* Je viens! *(To Ethel.)* That mean's I'm coming.

ETHEL. I'll get la porte.

BILLY. I wouldn't worry about Norman. I'll keep an eye on him.

ETHEL. Thank you. *(She holds the door as he lugs out the fishing gear. He gives her a final lusty salute.)*

BILLY. Goodbye, woman! *(He exits. She watches him go. She closes the screen door. She turns back to the room. Stops for a beat. Her attention is caught by a daddy-longlegs on the mantel. She grabs a newspaper and pursues the bug.)*

ETHEL. All right, hold it right there! Stay still! What's the matter with you? Look out, Elmer, he's right behind you! Oh, fiddle. Go on, climb the chimney, I don't care. Are you laughing at me? *(She takes down Elmer and hugs him to her.)* Oh, Elmer. *(She stands for a moment, lost in thought. The sound of the boat horn interrupts her. She turns and walks to the downstage right porch. She waves. She takes Elmer's hand and waves it. She sits on the railing.)* They say the lake is dying, but I don't believe it. They say all those houses along Koochakiyi Shores are killing Golden Pond. See, Elmer: no more yellow tents in the trees, no more bell calling the girls to supper. I left you in the window, Elmer, sitting on the sill, so you could look out at Camp Koochakiyi, when I was eight and nine and ten. And I'd stand on the bank, across the cove, at sunset, and I'd wave. And you always waved back, didn't you, Elmer? *(She thinks for a moment and then sings softly.)*

I can see the birds,
Way up in the sky,

Norman, Ethel, Billy