

ETHEL. Yes. Bye. *(Norman flings his book onto the couch and Ethel hands him the phone.)*

NORMAN. What will I say to her?

ETHEL. You'll think of something.

NORMAN. *(Into the phone.)* Hello. Who is this?

CHELSEA. It's your kid. Chelsea. Remember?

NORMAN. Oh, how are you?

CHELSEA. Not bad.

NORMAN. Oh. How nice. How's the weather? No earthquakes? *(Ethel shakes her head. She picks up the fishing pole, and takes the hat off Norman's head. She carries them both outside.)*

CHELSEA. We don't have earthquakes every day.

NORMAN. Good.

CHELSEA. You should come see for yourself. It's pretty nice.

NORMAN. Oh, I don't know if we'll be able to go all the way out there. Ethel's health isn't what it could be, you know.

CHELSEA. Is there something I should be worried about?

NORMAN. No, nothing serious. She's just more ornery than usual.

CHELSEA. Wouldn't have anything to do with you, would it?

NORMAN. Oh, no, I'm in great form myself. Just a lot of pain. Nothing to worry about.

CHELSEA. And you're coming to California.

NORMAN. Well, we'll certainly consider it.

CHELSEA. No. I want you to come.

NORMAN. Oh, thank you.

CHELSEA. Because I love you.

NORMAN. Oh, well. I love you, too. *(He's embarrassed.)*

CHELSEA. See how much easier that is than gallbladder surgery?

NORMAN. Yes. *(Brightly.)* Billy there?

CHELSEA. Yes. Billy's here.

NORMAN. Good. Could I speak to him?

CHELSEA. You got him. You two have fun in Wilmington. Okay?

NORMAN. Yes, we will. You have fun, too — the three of you.

CHELSEA. Okay. And call me.

NORMAN. Okay, Chelsea. Bye. *(He stares off while waiting for Billy to answer.)*

BILLY. This the old man of the sea?

NORMAN. Hello, cool breeze. How's the chicks?

BILLY. The chicks are fine. How's the fish?

NORMAN. The fish are all gone, somewhere.

BILLY. Well, where'd they go?

NORMAN. I don't know. They go to sleep, I believe. How's your reading?

BILLY. I'm halfway into *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

NORMAN. Don't tell me! How wonderful.

BILLY. Yeah, it ain't bad. Alexander Dumb-ass, you know.

NORMAN. Yes, I know, but it's pronounced Doo-ma, not Dumbass. Say that. Doo-ma.

BILLY. Doo-ma.

NORMAN. Tres bien.

BILLY. Merci. And au revoir. I've gotta go, sorry.

NORMAN. That's okay, run along. I expect you'll want to do a little cruising on your way to school.

BILLY. Tell Ethel to send me some Toll House cookies. Chelsea tries, but, you know, it ain't the same.

NORMAN. I'll tell her.

BILLY. And you hang loose, okay? 'Cause I kinda miss you, dude.

NORMAN. Well, I miss you, too.

BILLY. Okay. Cool.

NORMAN. Listen, Ethel and I are coming out to visit, you know.

BILLY. Get out of town. For real?

NORMAN. Oh, yes. In the winter.

BILLY. Don't bullshit me, man.

NORMAN. I'm not bullshitting you.

BILLY. Well, that would be very cool. I would like that.

NORMAN. Yes. Me, too. Bye! Adieu, mon vieux. *(He hangs up, feeling quite chipper. Ethel enters.)* I talked to Billy.

ETHEL. How nice.

NORMAN. He said he wants you to mail him some Toll House cookies.

ETHEL. Oh, he does, does he?

NORMAN. Yes. He said Chelsea makes them but they're not as good.

ETHEL. Huh. Well, that's the way it is with us grandmothers, you know. Chelsea mention us going out there for a visit?

NORMAN. I think she did.

ETHEL. I guess we could, don't you think?

NORMAN. Well ... I guess so.

ETHEL. I think they're going to make a go of it.

NORMAN. What do you mean?

ETHEL. The marriage. I think it's a success.

NORMAN. It's lasted over a month already.