English 1

Mr. Scholtz

“I Stand Here Ironing” Discussion Questions

At what point in her life did Emily’s mother have her?  What was going on in the world at that time?

Why did Emily have to be separated from her mother?

Does Emily’s mother feel she failed her?  Why or why not?

What expectations does Emily’s mother have for her eldest daughter?

Who is the mother talking to?  Why is this person interested in Emily? Does it seem like they understand Emily better than the speaker does?

Were you surprised that Emily was a funny comedic actress?  Why/why not?

Explain the ending:  “Only help her to know—help make it so there is cause for her to know—that she is more than this dress on the ironing board, helpless before the iron”.

What is the significance of this image?  How does this relate to the mother as well?