

## Family Album, USA

### Episode 20 “[Quality Time](#)“

#### Act 2

**Ellen** Hello there, Robbie. What are you doing up this late?  
**Robbie** Reading.  
**Ellen** Reading? At this hour? Ah, come on, Robbie. What are you doing up this late?  
**Robbie** Things on my mind.  
**Ellen** Do you care to talk about them?  
**Robbie** Sure, if you don't mind listening.  
**Ellen** Robbie, Robbie, remember me? I'm your mother. If you have something you want to talk about, I'm always prepared to listen.  
**Robbie** You haven't been around much lately.  
**Ellen** So that's it. OK, let's talk.  
**Robbie** You and Dad are like ships that pass in the night. Dad works hard, and he works late. You work hard on all your committees, and you work late.  
**Ellen** I thought you were proud of the work I do.  
**Robbie** I am, Mom. Real proud. You are one fantastic mom, but...but I've been noticing how little quality time you spend with Dad and me... and the family.  
**Ellen** It's a real problem, Robbie. I know it.  
**Robbie** I'm concerned. There must be a way that Day and you can spend more time together.  
**Ellen** Well, we always talk about taking a vacation together with the family.  
**Robbie** I think you ought to take a vacation away from the family-alone. Kind of a second honeymoon.  
**Ellen** It would be wonderful, but our schedules won't allow it.  
**Robbie** I think I have an idea.  
**Ellen** You do?  
**Robbie** Yup. I think I have an idea that will bring Dad and you together in a more scheduled way.  
**Ellen** What is it?  
**Robbie** Well, you know how Dad is always talking about the kids in the ward and how important it is for them to be paid attention to?  
**Ellen** Yes.  
**Robbie** Well...and how hard it is because the doctors and nurses are so busy?  
**Ellen** Yes.  
**Robbie** Well, how would it be if you took some time to work with Dad towards solving that problem?  
**Ellen** I don't get it.  
**Robbie** Like setting up a regular weekly reading program. You and Dad. You and Dr. Philip Stewart-going to the children's ward once or twice a week and reading to them.  
**Ellen** Not bad. Not a bad idea, Robbie. As a matter of fact, it fits right in with something I'm working on right now with the school-board committee.  
**Robbie** What's that?  
**Ellen** I've been trying to work out a program in the public school that will bring parents and teachers together once a week to read to the students-their own children, really. By doing that, it will encourage reading.  
**Robbie** So it might fit in with a program for reading to the kids in the hospital.

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**Ellen** You're right. We'll do it! I'm going to talk to Daddy about it right now.  
**Robbie** But Dad was so exhausted when he came home from work. Why don't you talk to him about it tomorrow?  
**Ellen** You are a very smart young man, Robbie. I think I'll wait until tomorrow.  
**Robbie** You won't forget, will you?  
**Ellen** Believe me, I won't. It is a great idea, and I promise you I won't forget.  
**Robbie** Thanks, Mom.  
**Ellen** Thank you, Robbie.