

Family Album, USA

Episode 20 “[Quality Time](#)“

Act 3

Ellen Good morning. What a wonderful morning! Don't the flowers smell wonderful?
Philip Good morning, Ellen. Yes, they do. That's why I'm reading my paper and having my coffee on the patio this morning. Ah, it does smell sweet. How was your school-board meeting last night? You must've come home very late.

Ellen Did you find the sandwich I made for you?
Philip Thanks, dear. I was so tired I didn't even finish it.
Ellen Philip, I've been working on this special project with the school board, and I'd like your opinion about it.

Philip What is it?
Ellen I've been trying to find a way to encourage reading.
Philip Good luck!
Ellen Well, I think I may have found a way to do it.
Philip Tell me about it. I work with families every day, Ellen. I see how people spend their leisure time-young and old.

Ellen Mostly watching television. Well, that would be OK if, and I repeat, if people took the time to read.
Philip I couldn't agree with you more.
Ellen The question is, how do we get them to read more?
Philip I think you're going to give me the answer to that question. You have that looking your eye.

Ellen I do have an answer, Philip. Or at least I think I do.
Philip Well, tell me about it.
Ellen The plan is a simple one. Involve the entire family in a reading project.
Philip In the home?
Ellen Yes, in the home. But first in the school-rooms.
Philip Hmm, interesting. But how do you plan to do that?
Ellen By arranging with the public schools to schedule one hour a week-to start with. During that time parents are invited to attend-and to read along with the children-their children.

Philip It can go beyond the school system, Ellen.
Ellen Really?
Philip I guarantee you it would go very well in the hospitals. My patients-mostly kids-would love to read and be read to.

Ellen You think so?
Philip I know so.
Ellen May be we can experiment with your patients and see how the plan works.
Philip I love the idea. Would you work with me?
Ellen I would love to, Philip.
Philip And that way, we'll spend more time together, Ellen. We just don't see each other anymore.

Ellen You and I are very busy these days. This is true. We need to find time to be together more, to do things together more - you and I. This would be a wonderful way to accomplish that.

Philip I have a question.
Ellen Yes?
Philip What do we read?
Ellen To the patients in the ward?
Philip Yes.
Ellen Well, let you and I talk about it. What would you like to read to them?
Philip Mrs. Stewart and I will read a poem by Robert Frost.
Ellen It's called "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening."
Philip Would you begin, Ellen?
Ellen All right. "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening" by Robert Frost.
Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.
Philip My little horse must think it queer.
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake.
The darkest evening of the year.
Ellen He gives his homes bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.
Ellen&Philip The woods are lovely, dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.
Grandpa You two belong on stage! That was wonderful!
Ellen Grandpa!
Philip Dad...Robbie. When did you come?
Grandpa We've been listening to you both. These are lucky kids.
Robbie Do you enjoy reading together?
Philip Well, we may read together aloud at home.
Grandpa You were right, Robbie.
Robbie I know.