

PLAY #13 THE NEW GRADUATE

by

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CHARACTERS

BETTY ROBINSON	A professional woman in her 40s.
BILLY	A twenty-one year old, recently returned home from college, in love with her son.
ROLAND ROBINSON	40s. A house husband.

THE NEW GRADUATE

(A twist on "The Graduate".)

(At Rise: BETTY, a professional woman sits behind a desk. She seems much taller than BILLY who sits slouched in front of her.)

BETTY

It's okay if you call me Betty.

BILLY

I could do that, Mrs. Robinson. I mean, Betty.

BETTY

So... You're in love with my son.

BILLY

Well... You know --

BETTY

I'm not sure I do know.

BILLY

Well--

BETTY

I certainly had my times at Radcliffe. With other women. And then I got over that and settled down to a professional life, which included raising children.

BILLY

Brian and I would very much like to raise children.

BETTY

Not your own.

BILLY

They would be ours.

BETTY

Not in the same way that Brian belongs to Roland and I. (Pause.) Of course, you and my husband have met.

BILLY

Our families have been friends a long time.

BETTY

He's a good man. Roland. Too good for me, really.

BILLY

You think so?

BETTY

I know so. You know how women are these days.

BILLY

I know not to assume that woman... People... Are one way or another way.

BETTY

Of course not. So young still. Billy. My boy Billy. What do you have in mind for... Well... Making a living?

BILLY

I'm still figuring that out.

BETTY

Of course.

BILLY

A lot of my free time I'm an activist.

BETTY

Oh dear... Have you given any thought to plastics?

BILLY

Plastics?

BETTY

Surely you know. It's still a solid industry, Billy.

BILLY

I have concerns... About the environment.

BETTY

It has the potential to provide for both you and Brian, and your entire family really, for the rest of your lives. Doesn't that sound attractive?

BILLY

I'm not sure I can fully get behind plastics.

BETTY

You don't need to get behind it. You just need to get on top of it. Do you understand me? You take hold of the reigns and ride it!

BILLY

Mrs. Robinson. Over thirteen billion plastic bags are produced every year.

BETTY

Exactly. The industry's growing with the times. It can barely keep up.

BILLY

It takes twenty-four million gallons of oil to make a billion plastic bottles.

BETTY

Billy. We are a product-based society. We always have been. And always will be. Plastics are a safe and sterile way of protecting products from contamination...

(ROLAND enters the office.)

BILLY

However... With peak oil approaching--

BETTY

I won't hear this nonsense.

ROLAND

Did someone say peak oil?

(ROLAND kisses BETTY.)

BETTY

Roland!

(BILLY stands up and shakes hands with ROLAND.)

ROLAND

No need to get up! Really. No need to be old fashioned.

BETTY

I was just explaining to Billy that if he wants to marry our son, he really ought to consider a good job.

In a solid industry. Flowing downstream. Rather than... Fighting the currents upstream. Wouldn't you agree?

ROLAND

It's probably best I don't get involved in this, Betty.

BETTY

Of course. You see. Roland realizes that somebody has to pay the bills around here. It'll be the same with you and Brian.

BILLY

Of course, Mrs. Robinson.

BETTY

Betty. Please.

BILLY

Sorry.

BETTY

I have a business date. I really must run. Perhaps, Roland, you could entertain him for a while. Take him to a good lunch. Somewhere nice. Very nice. Won't you?

ROLAND

I don't have any other plans this afternoon except a workout later on. I suppose I could fit it in.

BETTY

Good. Have a lovely afternoon. And maybe talk some sense into him while you're at it.

(BETTY shakes hands with BILLY, kisses ROLAND, and exits. ROLAND goes to a cabinet and grabs a bottle of scotch.)

ROLAND

Probably in the end, however, it doesn't matter. Drink?

BILLY

No thank you.

(ROLAND turns on some modern dance music.)

ROLAND

May I ask you a question?

BILLY

Sure.

ROLAND

What do you think of me, Billy?

BILLY

Well... I...

ROLAND

You've known me nearly all your life.

BILLY

Maybe I will have a drink.

(ROLAND pours him a drink.)

ROLAND

You surely must have some opinion of me.

BILLY

You always seemed like... A really great dad!

ROLAND

Did you know I was a stripper?

BILLY

What?

ROLAND

Did you know that?

BILLY

Maybe we should... Go have lunch.

ROLAND

Sit down, Billy. Relax.

(ROLAND shuts off the office lights and
begins to undress.)

BILLY

But Mrs. Robinson...

ROLAND

She'll be gone for hours. Are you kidding? A woman in
her position doesn't just grab a quick bite. She

luxuriates for hours. Meticulously processing every word before it issues forth from her voluminous mouth. No. Sit down. I insist.

(BILLY sits.)

BILLY

You said...

ROLAND

What? Voluminous mouth?

BILLY

No. In the end it...

ROLAND

It doesn't matter! Of course not! Where you work. What you do. For a living. All that matters is love. Wouldn't you say?

BILLY

I know I'm in love with Brian.

ROLAND

Of course you are.

BILLY

But Mrs. Robinson...

(ROLAND has moved in close to BILLY.)

ROLAND

Has a voluminous mouth. Are you going to get undressed or not?

BILLY

No. Mr. Robinson? This is wrong. It's wrong!

(BILLY turns on the office lights.)

ROLAND

What's wrong about it?

BILLY

It's not right.

ROLAND

You're worried about Brian.

BILLY

I dunno. We haven't really talked about this.

ROLAND

You haven't talked about... Open relationships?

BILLY

No!

ROLAND

It's best to establish boundaries early on. Maybe you don't find me... Sexy enough?

BILLY

No... I mean...

ROLAND

Is that it?

BILLY

You're...

ROLAND

You do find me sexy. Or... Not bad for an old man?

BILLY

No. I mean --

ROLAND

There's something to be said for experience.
(Pause.)

BILLY

I'm sure.

ROLAND

You're so young. Billy... Is this your first time with an older man?

BILLY

NO!

ROLAND

It's okay if it is! You don't have to be embarrassed.

BILLY

I'm not. Why would you think that?

ROLAND

Have you and Billy... ever?

BILLY

What? You mean...? Don't be ridiculous!

ROLAND

I have a sense that there's an old fashioned part of you, Billy.

BILLY

You do?

ROLAND

Yes. And it's a beautiful part of you.

BILLY

You really think so?

(ROLAND begins putting his clothes back on.)

What are you doing?

ROLAND

We should probably go and have some lunch.

BILLY

Wait a minute.

ROLAND

A nice lunch. That's probably the most appropriate thing to do. Sweep this all under the rug and forget it's there. Don't you think?

BILLY

No, Mr. Robinson.

(BILLY shuts off the lights.)

I don't.

BLACKOUT

END OF PLAY

