

"THE GRADUATE"

Screenplay by  
Buck Henry

EXT. ROBINSON HOUSE - NIGHT

The car comes to a stop in the Robinson driveway.  
They sit for a moment.

MRS. ROBINSON

Thank you.

BEN

Right.

She doesn't move. Ben gets out and goes around to  
her side and opens the door.

MRS. ROBINSON

Will you come in, please?

BEN

What?

MRS. ROBINSON

I want you to come in till I get  
the lights on.

BEN

What for?

MRS. ROBINSON

Because I don't feel safe until I  
get the lights on.

They move to the door. She takes out her key and  
opens the door.

INT. ROBINSON HALL AND SUNROOM - NIGHT

MRS. ROBINSON

Would you mind walking ahead of  
me to the sun porch. I feel  
funny about coming into a dark  
house.

BEN

But it's light in there now.

MRS. ROBINSON

Please.

Ben turns and walks down the hall. They enter sunroom.

MRS. ROBINSON (CONT'D)

What do you drink? Bourbon?

BEN

Look - I drove you home. I was glad to do it. But I have some things on my mind. Can you understand that?

She nods.

BEN (CONT'D)

All right then.

MRS. ROBINSON

What do you drink?

He looks at her.

MRS. ROBINSON (CONT'D)

Benjamin - I'm sorry to be this way, but I don't want to be alone in this house.

BEN

Why not?

MRS. ROBINSON

Please wait till my husband gets home.

BEN

When is he coming back?

MRS. ROBINSON

I don't know.

She pours herself a drink.

MRS. ROBINSON (CONT'D)

Drink?

BEN

No.

She hands him a drink. There is a pause.

BEN (CONT'D)  
Are you always this much afraid  
of being alone?

MRS. ROBINSON  
Yes.

BEN  
Well, why can't you just lock the  
doors and go to bed?

MRS. ROBINSON  
I'm very neurotic.

She turns on the phonograph. SOUND of PHONOGRAPH.

MRS. ROBINSON (CONT'D)  
May I ask you a question?

Ben looks at her.

MRS. ROBINSON (CONT'D)  
What do you think of me?

BEN  
What do you mean?

MRS. ROBINSON  
You've known me nearly all of  
your life. You must have formed  
some opinion.

BEN  
Well - I've always thought that  
you were a very - nice - person.

MRS. ROBINSON  
Did you know I was an alcoholic?

BEN  
What?

MRS. ROBINSON  
Did you know that?

BEN  
Look - I think I should be going.

MRS. ROBINSON  
Sit down, Benjamin.

BEN

Mrs. Robinson - if you don't mind  
my saying so - this conversation  
is getting a little strange. Now  
I'm sure that Mr. Robinson will  
be here any minute and -

MRS. ROBINSON

No.

BEN

What?

MRS. ROBINSON

My husband will be back quite  
late.

They look at each other. Ben is half standing.

MRS. ROBINSON (CONT'D)

He should be gone for several  
hours.

She takes a step toward him. He puts his hand up and  
retreats around the other side of the chair.

BEN

Oh my God.

MRS. ROBINSON

Pardon?

BEN

Oh no, Mrs. Robinson, oh no.

MRS. ROBINSON

What's wrong?

BEN

Mrs. Robinson, you didn't - I  
mean you didn't expect -

MRS. ROBINSON

What?

BEN

I mean - you didn't really think  
that I would do something like  
that.

MRS. ROBINSON

Like what?

BEN

What do you think?

MRS. ROBINSON

Well I don't know.

BEN

For God's sake, Mrs. Robinson,  
here we are, you've got me into  
your house. You give me a drink.  
You put on music, now you start  
opening up your personal life to  
me and tell me your husband won't  
be home for hours.

MRS. ROBINSON

So?

BEN

Mrs. Robinson - you are trying to  
seduce me.

There is a pause. She looks at him.

BEN (CONT'D)

(weaker)

Aren't you?

MRS. ROBINSON

Why no. I hadn't thought of it.  
I feel rather flattered that you  
-

BEN

Mrs. Robinson, will you forgive  
me for what I just said?

MRS. ROBINSON

It's all right.

BEN

It's not all right, it's the  
worst thing I've ever said to  
anyone.

MRS. ROBINSON

Sit down.

BEN

Please forgive me. Because I like you. I don't think of you that way. But I'm mixed up.

MRS. ROBINSON

All right. Now finish your drink.

BEN

Mrs. Robinson, it makes me sick that I said that to you.

MRS. ROBINSON

We'll forget it right now. Finish your drink.

BEN

What is wrong with me?

MRS. ROBINSON

Have you ever seen Elaine's portrait?

BEN

Her portrait?

MRS. ROBINSON

Yes.

BEN

No.

MRS. ROBINSON

We had it done last Christmas. Would you like to see it?

BEN

Very much.

We move with Mrs. Robinson and Ben out of the sunroom, into the hall, up the stairs and along the hall to the doorway to Elaine's room.