

GRADUATION SPEECH

by TIM SHOEMAKER

GENRE: Drama

SYNOPSIS: To get youth thinking and talking about what it means to live each day as if it were your last.

DIRECTOR'S TIP: The staging for this script can get rather static and boring. Let Tom have fun. When he explains "carpe diem" to his sister, let him do something valiant with, say, the umbrella that the girls brought in. For example, he can use the umbrella as a sword and thrust it to the heavens as he says, "Carpe Diem! Seize the moment!" You don't necessarily have to do that particular action, but encourage the actor to have fun with the role. This is his twin sister and he's trying to save both himself and her embarrassment.

TIME: Under 5 minutes

CAST BREAKDOWN: 3

TOPIC: Graduation, Youth

SCRIPTURE REFERENCE: Matthew 6:27, Matthew 6:33-35

CHURCH YEAR SEASON: Any

SUGGESTED USE: Youth Service

CHARACTERS:

Amanda-High school senior; proud, intelligent; the valedictorian

Liz-High school senior; Amanda's friend

Tom-High school senior; Amanda's twin brother

PROPS: 1) Chair and desk
2) Paper with typed speech
3) Pen
4) Umbrella

COSTUMES: Contemporary clothing, appropriate to character

SOUND: Three wireless mics

LIGHTING: General stage

SETTING: Amanda's bedroom

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As the scene opens, TOM is sitting on the chair at the desk. He is reading a typed paper. He shakes his head, crosses something out, and writes in something new. AMANDA and LIZ ENTER. They are laughing and have a wet umbrella.

LIZ: *(Shaking water off the umbrella and leaning it against the desk)* Thanks for sharing your umbrella, Amanda. *(To TOM)* It just started pouring out there!

AMANDA: *(To TOM, with disgust)* Looks like that's not all I'm sharing. Tom, what are you doing in my room?

TOM: Well, to tell you the truth, I was just reading over your graduation speech.

AMANDA: *(Softens toward him immediately. She is proud of her speech and is fishing for praise.)* Oh. Well, in that case, make yourself comfortable. How do you like it?

TOM: It's OK for a rough draft.

AMANDA: *(Indignant)* Rough draft? I've rewritten it three or four times. It's finished.

TOM: *(With disbelief)* Finished?

AMANDA: Yes ... finished. What's wrong with it?

TOM: It just needs a little polishing.

AMANDA: *(Grabs speech from TOM)* Give me that. *(Looks at it for an instant, then gasps)* You've crossed out nearly every line!

TOM: It was a little wordy.

AMANDA: It's just the right length. It flows.

TOM: It doesn't flow. It floods. It needed a little tightening.

AMANDA: Oh, come on. I think you're just jealous that I'm graduating with honors and you're not. *(Ignoring him)* Liz, listen to some of this. Tell me what you think. *(She reads with a pompous tone, and gestures.)* Before I begin my speech today, I'd like to say thank you to my teachers, those distinguished educators who helped inspire me to become the valedictorian that I am today. To Mr. Prestor and the way he make calculus come alive for me. To Mrs. Angus for awakening my heart to literature. To Miss Lueck for making French class more than exciting. I'd like to thank Mr. Warren for teaching me to express myself through art. I'd like to thank Miss Boelkins, Mr. Warden, Mr. Hankins and Ms. Stewart. I'd like to thank ...