

Graduation Ceremony

Story By: Andrew Frinkle

Candace and Danny were waiting for their turn to go across stage. No, it wasn't the talent show. It wasn't the Academy Awards for movies or even the Grammy's for music. It was for graduation! They were both so nervous, and it was hard to think about anything except the huge stage.

Danny looked at his friend and gave her a nervous smile. She gripped his hand for reassurance. In both of their minds, they imagined their turn strolling across stage, and they were both unknowingly thinking the same thing: I'm going to trip and fall on that cord, and everyone will laugh at me!

Candace returned his smile with her own uneven grin that was almost a grimace. Her palms were sweaty. At least she didn't have to give a speech like Sandra – that would have made it horrible. She couldn't imagine how Sandra must have felt. Personally, she would have been shaking at the knees and gone dry in the mouth, not to mention forgetting her words. She made it through the speech without messing up though.

Danny's feet bounced nervously as the students in the classes sitting in front of them were called one at a time to come up. Names were called, and some special awards were announced for the best students in art, music, P.E., dance, math, and science. Class by class, row by row, it was inching closer to their turn. It was just minutes away, but time went by so quickly. Oh, no! It was their turn now.

Dreading it like a dentist's visit, they both stood up with their class. They had to file over along the wall and climb the ramp. Then, one at a time, alphabetically, the principal called their names. That meant that Candace was going to have to go before him! Then there would be a few more students, and it would be Danny's turn.

"Candace Marie Godfrey, winner of a principal's award for great behavior and grades!" The audience clapped and cheered. Danny watched his friend pace carefully across the stage, pause to shake hands, get pictures done, and then exit on the opposite side.

"Daniel Adam Richmond, winner of a perfect attendance award and A-B Honor Roll." Danny stepped out cautiously, hearing the heels of his shoes sound loudly on the wooden stage. He swallowed deeply, took a breath, and walked across the stage. The principal and vice principal both shook his hand, smiled, and then he was done.

Moments later, he rejoined his friend offstage and they took a collective breath of relief together. It was over, and they had graduated. The little piece of paper proved it, and neither of them had fallen down!



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Use the information in the story to answer the questions below.

1. What kind of event are Candace and Danny at?
 - A. prom
 - B. a recital
 - C. a retirement party
 - D. graduation

2. What is the name of the student giving the speech in the ceremony?
 - A. Candace
 - B. Danny
 - C. Sandra
 - D. Eva

3. Based on the story, how would you describe Danny and Candace's relationship?
 - A. They are rivals.
 - B. They are supportive friends.
 - C. They just barely get along.
 - D. They are mean to each other.

4. Which two awards did Danny get?
 - A. Honor Roll and Dance Certificate
 - B. Honor Roll and Math Award
 - C. Honor Roll and Perfect Attendance
 - D. Perfect Attendance and Science Award

5. When they have both crossed the stage, what do they feel?
 - A. scared
 - B. bored
 - C. lonely
 - D. relieved

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