

CHARACTER AND CITIZENSHIP SECTION**THE GRADUATE FACES THE WORLD.***A Playlet in One Act*

By PABLO M. CUASAY

Characters:

GRADUATE

*Death**Inaction**Immorality**Deceit**Vice**Life**Ambition**Character**Discipline**Faith**Service*

SCENE: The graduate, dressed in cap and gown, with a diploma tucked under her arm, stands facing, undecided, the road leading to a city in the far background. As she stands, a voice from an unseen person speaks.

The Voice—You have just graduated from school, and now you stand on the road leading to a bigger, wider world. You have traveled a long, wearisome way. You were still a small girl in pig-tails when you started the trek toward your goal. You have spent many sleepless nights in your studies, your parents have spent an enormous amount with which to provide you for your journey. Many times you have been discouraged on the way, but you have not let discouragements stopped you. You have met troubles and disappointments and difficulties, but you have always overcome them. You have been courageous and strong. You have always heard the small, still voice that spoke to you during the times of trial. You have finished your course. But that is not the end of the road. Graduation is not the end of your endeavors. It is but a big signpost leading to a world, much bigger than your school, a world with more vexing problems, more res-

possible tasks, more temptations, larger opportunities. You are now going to face them all, alone, without the guide of teachers. But your school has given you, or supposed to have given you, the necessary equipment with which to face the world outside of your school.

I see that you are tired. You may rest a little while before you proceed in your journey.

(The graduate lies down under the shade of a tree while a soft music is played. "Nocturne" by Chopin, "Angel's Serenade" by Braga, or "Serenade" by Schubert will do.)

When the Graduate falls asleep, Death appears.

Death—I have traveled over land and sea and air, and everywhere I bring death and sorrow. (Sees the Graduate sleeping.) Here is another victim of mine. Ah, this time I have an easy task, for she is helpless.

(As Death is about to use his scythe, Life springs from behind, among the bushes.)

Life—She is not helpless because I am here. She is a girl of great promise. Before she fulfills her mission in the world, you have no right to claim her.



Death—Let us fight it out and see who will win her.

(Life and Death struggle. Life wins. Death flees.)

Inaction enters.

Inaction—I see a beautiful damsel. She appears to be a lazy girl. I shall take her to my dwelling. There she can do whatever she likes. Pretty soon she will get used to my ways.

(*Inaction* goes to the Graduate and whispers in her ear.)

Ambition comes in time to drive *Inaction* away.

Ambition—She is not of your kind. She needs sleep and rest after a long and wearisome journey. She does not belong to your lazy, complacent company. She has a goal to reach. She is going to hitch her wagon to a star. Begone, before I give you a good thrashing.

(*Inaction* leaves in haste.)

Immorality enters and sees the Graduate.

Immorality—My keen eyes and my sense of smell do not betray me. Aha, she's a young pretty girl. With her education, it may be a bit difficult to deceive her, but I'll succeed in leading her to the trap in the end as usual. (He bends and is about to kiss the Graduate when *Character* comes.)

Character—Ah, the devil himself. On your old tricks again?

(He brandishes his sword and *Immorality* scampers away.)

Deceit and *Vice* enter.

Vice—Look at that sleeping beauty. We shall have another victim. We shall drag her away to shame and disgrace. We shall tempt her with easy money and beautiful dresses and precious stones. She will surely be dazzled by their glitter, as many have been before her.

Deceit—That's a bright idea. She will be an easy prey. A girl of her kind, with her training and education, once she falls into our hands, can easily deceive people and make believe that she has a beautiful soul when she reeking with filth and sin.

(*Truth* and *Discipline* come in.)

Truth—I know your dirty designs, you filthy, stinking traders!

Discipline—And you think you could lure her away from the clean, honest path with your cheap, dirty money. No, you can't.

(The four grapple, *Deceit* against *Discipline*, *Vice* against *Character*. After a while *Deceit* and *Vice* take leave, while *Faith* and *Service* enters. The Graduate wakes up, and sees all her benefactors.) (Please turn to page 127.)

THE GRADUATE . . .

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Life—Young Graduate, you have a long way to go, and a difficult one, too. Without a good, healthy body, you can not go far. Remember this: Health is wealth. You can never be truly happy if you are ill or are suffering from a disease. And so keep yourself healthy and physically strong so that you will be fit to meet all the hardships that you will meet on your long journey.

Ambition—Young Graduate, keep your ambition ever on fire. When you become easily satisfied with things, when you have become complacent, you have stopped growing. Ever keep before you high ideals. Remember what Browning said: "A man's reach should be farther than his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

Character—Character is what you are in the dark. Whether you are seen by people or not, you must think and say and do only the best. When money is lost, nothing is lost; when health is lost, something is lost; but when character is lost, *everything* is lost. I offer you this sword with which to fight anything that's wrong and mean.

Discipline — Young Graduate, your greatest enemy is not disease; it is not the thief, the murderer, or the gangster. Your greatest enemy is *yourself*, the self in you that possesses unclean desires, unholy thoughts, a sharp temper, a loose tongue. Unless you are a master of yourself, unless you have self-control, you can not expect to lead people.

Truth—Truth will make you free. Truth will break the chains of doubts and skepticisms. If you do not know the truth, you are like a person groping his way in the dark. I give you the Bible, the word of God, as a lamp unto your feet and a guide unto your path.

Faith—Young Graduate, you must have faith in yourself, faith in your fellowmen, faith in God's eternal goodness, faith in the final triumph of right over wrong, of life over death. I give you this necklace, a symbol, of the faith that spans the gap between man's belief in the visible and the invisible, the faith that bridges the distance between you and God.

Service—Young Graduate, your mission in life should not be only to take in but also to give out. Give

the best that you have, to the highest that you know, without counting the cost. Let Jesus Christ be your supreme ideal of service, whose shameful death on the cross was the substantiation of his words: "I came not to be ministered unto but to minister."

All the benefactors (together)—Young Graduate, we wish you success.

Graduate—Thank you, every one. With the help of all of you, I shall not fail.

(The Graduate looks at the road ahead of him. Martial music may be played. As the Graduate begins to walk, the benefactors watching him, the curtain slowly falls.)

HAYDN, THE . . .

(Continued from page 115)

a composer of music spread far and wide. Numerous musicians sought him out. He enjoyed very friendly relations with Mozart (pronounced *mot-sart*), who later became a great composer.

When Haydn was nearly 60 years old, he went to England, where he wrote more symphonies. The English people received him very enthusiastically, and Oxford University gave

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