



CARTER HIGH
SENIOR YEAR

JUST BE
Yourself



SADDLEBACK
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING



Chapter 1

Rick was in the kitchen. His mom and dad were there too. Rick was tired. He hadn't slept well.

It was the first day of his senior year. Rick was glad to be a senior. But it was also his first day at Carter High. And he was worried about going to a new school.

His mom said, "Don't worry, Rick. I am sure you will like Carter High."

How could his mom be so sure? She had been to Carter High only once. And that was to sign him up for school.

His dad said, "Your mom is right, Rick. I am sure you will like Carter High."



But his dad hadn't been there at all.

His dad said, "Soon you will have many friends."

Maybe he would. But they might find out about his hearing problem. And they wouldn't want to be his friends then.

His dad said, "Let me know when you are ready to go. I will drive you to school."

"That's OK. I want to walk," Rick said.

Rick wasn't in a hurry to get to school. And it might do him good to walk.

Rick ate his breakfast. Then he got up to go.

He said, "I will see you after school."

His mom said, "Wait, Rick. Don't forget your hearing aid."

"Yes, Rick. Don't forget your hearing aid," his dad said.

"I am not going to wear it," Rick said.

He knew his mom and dad wouldn't like that. But it was his choice.

His dad said, "You have to wear it. You know you hear better when you do."

Rick said, "I don't care. I am not going to wear it."

His dad said, "You know you need to wear it, Rick. You make better grades when you do."

Rick knew that was true. He did make better grades when he wore it.

But he didn't want the teachers to know he didn't hear well. And he didn't want the students to know either.

Rick was good at lip reading. He did OK when he could see the people who were talking. At least most of the time he did OK.

His mom said, "You have to wear your hearing aid, Rick."

"I am not going to wear it," Rick said.

He was tired of arguing with his mom and dad.

“But why?” his mom asked.

Rick said, “You know why. I don’t want the other students to know I have a hearing problem.”

His dad said, “You are being silly, Rick. The other students won’t care.”

“But they will care. And I know what they will say about me,” Rick said.

Some students at Rick’s other school had made fun of him.

His dad said, “Just be yourself, Rick. Pretending you don’t have a hearing problem isn’t worth it. There are times when you should care what others say. But this isn’t one of them.”

That was easy for his dad to say. He wasn’t the one who had to wear a hearing aid. And he wasn’t the one the kids had made fun of.

Rick hurried out the door. What a way to start the first day of his senior year.

He had upset both his dad and his mom. And now they would worry about him too.



Chapter 2

Rick walked slowly to school. He saw a box just inside the door. It had maps of the school in it. He got one.

Rick knew he had Mrs. Dodd for his first class. But he didn't know where her room was. He tried to find it on the map.

A boy came in the school. He got a map too.

The boy said, "Hi. My name is Ed. I haven't seen you before. Are you new here?"

"Yeah," Rick said.

"I was new last year. So I know how hard the first day is. Do you need any

help?” Ed asked.

“Yeah. I am trying to find Mrs. Dodd’s room. I have her for my first class,” Rick said.

Ed said, “I don’t know who she is. She must be new. What class do you have her for?”

“History,” Rick said.

Ed looked at his map. And Rick looked at his map.

Then Ed said, “I see her room. I am going that way. Do you want me to show you where it is?”

“Yeah. Thanks,” Rick said.

“I am in a hurry to get to my class. So is it OK for us to walk fast?” Ed asked.

“Sure,” Rick said.

Ed quickly walked Rick to his class.

Then Ed said, “Do you know who your other teachers are?”

Rick said, “No. The woman in the

office said Mrs. Dodd would tell me.”

“Do you want me to meet you here after our first class? Then I can show you where your next class is,” Ed said.

“Thanks. That would be great,” Rick said.

“OK. See you then,” Ed said.

Ed quickly walked off.

Rick liked Ed. And he hoped he had made a friend.

Rick went in his class. He sat down at a desk in the front row. He liked to sit in the front row. That way he could hear the teacher.

The class was OK. But Mrs. Dodd gave them a lot of homework. And she said they would have to write a paper.

Rick heard most of what Mrs. Dodd said. But he didn’t hear all of it.

The end of class bell rang. Ed was in the hall. He was waiting for Rick.

