

Harmony Tree International Speech Festival (HTISF)
2024-2025 Set Pieces for Asia Division

FINAL

Monologue
Born in 2009-2010

Choice A
Time Limit:
4 minutes

Confessions of a Shopaholic

By Sophie Kinsella, an adapted version.

REBECCA: Jane, I'm sorry I'm late. They should list shopping under cardiovascular activity. My heart never beats as fast as it does when I see a 'reduced by 50 per cent' sign. *(Sitting down)* The shop assistant ducks behind the counter and produces the green box. She slides it into a thick glossy bag with dark green cord handles and hands it to me. I almost want to close my eyes, the feeling is so wonderful.

That moment when your fingers curl round the handles of a shiny, uncreased bag — and all the gorgeous new things inside it becomes yours. What's it like? It's like going hungry for days, then cramming your mouth full of warm buttered toast. It's like waking up and realising it's the weekend! *(Turning to the waitress)* Oh, Cappuccino please. *(To Jane)* Anyway, I walk out of the shop, still in a haze of a delight. I've got a Denny and George scarf. I've got — then I heard him — "Rebecca."

A man's voice interrupts my thoughts. I looked up and my stomach gave a lurch of horror. It was Luke Brandon. You know — Luke — the manager... Luke Brandon is standing on the street, right in front of me, and he's staring down at my carrier bag. What's he doing here on the pavement anyway? Don't people like that have chauffeurs or something?

"Did you get it all right? Is that it?" He gestures to the bag and I feel my cheeks flame red.

"Yes," I say eventually. "I thought a... a scarf would be nice."

"Very generous of you. Denny and George. Your aunt must be a stylish lady." He raises his eyebrows.

"She is... She's terribly creative and original"

"I'm sure she is," said Luke, "What's her name?"

Oh god. I should have run as soon as I saw him, while I had a chance. Now I'm paralysed. I can't think of a single female name. "Erm... Ermintrude," I hear myself saying.

"Aunt Ermintrude," said Luke thoughtfully. "Well, give her my best wishes."

He nods at me, and walks off, and I stare after him, trying to work out if he guessed or not. You see Jane, after all — I had asked him to have extra time to buy a present for my aunt! *(The waitress brings the cappuccino)* Thank you! I was ready for this.

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You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown

By Clark Gesner

CHARLIE BROWN: I think lunchtime is about the worst time of day for me. Always having to sit here alone. Of course, sometimes, mornings aren't so pleasant either. Waking up and wondering if anyone would really miss me if I never got out of bed. Then there's the night, too. Lying there and thinking about all the stupid things I've done during the day. Well, lunchtime is among the worst times of the day for me.

Well, I guess I'd better see what I've got. Peanut butter. Some psychiatrists say that people who eat peanut butter sandwiches are lonely... I guess they're right. And when you're really lonely, the peanut butter sticks to the roof of your mouth.

There's that cute little redheaded girl eating her lunch over there. I wonder what she would do if I went over and asked her if I could sit and have lunch with her?... She'd probably laugh right in my face... There's no reason why I couldn't just go over and sit there. I could do that right now. All I have to do is stand up... I'm standing up!... I'm sitting down. I'm a coward. I'm so much of a coward, she wouldn't even think of looking at me. She hardly ever does look at me. In fact, I can't remember her ever looking at me. Why shouldn't she look at me? Is she so great, and I'm so small, that she can't spare one little moment?

SHE'S LOOKING AT ME!! SHE'S LOOKING AT ME!! (*he puts his lunch bag over his head*) If that little redheaded girl is looking at me with this stupid bag over my head, she must think I'm the biggest fool alive. But, if she isn't looking at me, then maybe I could take it off quickly and she'd never notice it.

On the other hand...I can't tell if she's looking, until I take it off! Then again, if I never take it off, I'll never have to know if she was looking or not. On the other hand...it's very hard to breathe in here. (*he removes his sack*) Whew! She's not looking at me! I wonder why she never looks at me? Oh well, another lunch hour over with...only 2,863 to go.