

令和 5 年度第 40 回全国商業高等学校英語スピーチコンテスト

Recitation A

Mysterious Stranger

He really did look like a tourist, with a camera around his neck and bottle of sunscreen sticking out of his tote bag.

The portly man sat on the terrace, sipping lemonade and pretending to look at a glossy cruise brochure. His sunglasses masked his eyes, but I knew he wasn't looking at the brochure: he hadn't turned a page for the last ten minutes.

As I brought him his clam chowder, he coughed up a "thank you" and looked at me briefly. I tried not to stare at the tiny scar across his left eyebrow.

I walked back inside with my empty tray, shaking my head. He looked familiar, but I couldn't quite place him.

Then it hit me. The car accident. The mysterious stranger who helped me out of my smashed car, just before it exploded. I rushed back to his table.

He was gone. I moved his saucer and found his tip, along with a card:

I am deeply indebted to you. The night of your car accident, I was on my way to rob a jewelry store. Saving your life brought things back in perspective. I now live an honest life, thanks to you. God bless you! Mr.D.

I shivered. The night of my car accident, I was heading for an interview in a shady dance club. Seeing human kindness through his heroic gesture turned my life around and brought faith back into my life. I unfolded the tip he left. Among the singles was a thousand dollar note with a pen mark underlining "In God We Trust." I said a silent prayer for him and got back to work, smiling.

(275 words)