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Oliver glanced at his watch. There were ten minutes left until the supermarket closed and he was rushing round, quickly dropping things he needed for the weekend into his trolley. He hadn't been in his own flat long and now his mother had invited herself for dinner the following day. He really wanted to impress her with his ability to cope on his own, but he knew that the usual critical comments would soon appear if everything wasn't perfect. He hoped that the three days he'd spent cleaning the place from top to bottom wouldn't be wasted, and he'd even gone so far as painting the front door. His mother wouldn't notice that, though, of course. What she would notice was the dust on top of the pictures, or the old sofa, or one of a thousand other things that Oliver had forgotten about. Still, he was determined to give her a good meal, and maybe that would put her in a slightly better mood than usual.

He checked his shopping list again and bent over to look through his trolley. He mentally ticked off the items and then realised that he still needed eggs. As he straightened up to set off towards the dairy section, there was an enormous collision, a clatter of tins and a loud shriek of pain. When Oliver had recovered his balance, he saw an attractive woman of about nineteen on her knees, putting tins and vegetables back into a handheld basket.

"Why don't you watch where you're going?" she snapped at him over her shoulder. "Some people just have no manners. Honestly ..."

"Er ... sorry," stammered Oliver. "Let me help you." He began to pick tins up. "It really wasn't my fault, though, you know. I was just ..." The girl grabbed a tin of tuna from his hands.

"Never mind," she said, her basket now full, and she strode off down the aisle without looking back. Oliver watched her go and sighed. He

never seemed to have much luck with girls. Maybe that was just what he needed to show his mother how grown up he was. He turned back to his own trolley and began to push it. Maybe if she came to dinner and he introduced her to an intelligent, charming young woman then she would stop calling him every day to check he was okay. As Oliver thought about this possibility, something caught his eye and he stopped his trolley. There was a red leather purse on top of his shopping. It must have come out of the girl's basket and landed in his trolley. Oliver quickly glanced around, looking for the girl. She wouldn't be able to pay for her shopping. He picked up the purse, left his trolley and sprinted towards the line of checkouts.

When he got there, he scanned the lines of customers waiting to pay. There were about a dozen queues, but Oliver couldn't see the girl in any of them. Thinking that she must still be shopping somewhere in the supermarket, Oliver turned to go and find her when he suddenly heard a familiar voice at the front of the queue next to him.

"I'm sure I had it here a minute ago. I want to speak to the manager. I think it's been stolen. It must be someone in this supermarket because I know ... "

She stopped as she realised that Oliver was standing next to her, holding her purse out towards her.

"Lost something?" Oliver asked.

The girl smiled, then recognised Oliver and frowned, before her expression softened again and she took the purse with a faint smile on her lips.

"Thanks," she said quietly.

1. Oliver is anxious to prove to his mother that he ____
 - A. has learned a lot about cooking.
 - B. is capable of living independently.
 - C. knows she looked after him very well.
 - D. has learned not to be so negative.
2. When she visits his flat, Oliver's mother will ____
 - A. appreciate the effort he has made.
 - B. find something she isn't happy about.
 - C. help him do up his flat.
 - D. remind him to get new furniture.
3. The young woman drops her shopping because ____
 - A. she and Oliver bump into each other.
 - B. her basket is too full.
 - C. she is frightened by Oliver.
 - D. she feels pain in her knees.

4. When Oliver offers to help, the young woman _____.
A. forgives him for what he has done.
B. shows that she doesn't trust him.
C. thanks him despite her anger.
D. refuses to listen to his explanation.

5. Oliver thinks that his mother might give him more independence if he _____.
A. found a friend for her.
B. had a girlfriend.
C. told her to stop phoning him.
D. had nicer friends.

6. When he sees the purse, Oliver realises that _____.
A. he might be accused of theft.
B. there's no money in it.
C. he could get his revenge.
D. it fell into his trolley by accident.

7. Oliver manages to find the girl because he _____.
A. sees her standing in one of the queues.
B. knows where she is still shopping.
C. recognises her voice when she speaks.
D. joins the same queue as her.

I looked out of the window again and then back at the clock. "Typical Helen!" I thought to myself, wondering what excuse she would try this time. We had had this arrangement for a year now. We took it in turns to drive to work, stopping along the way to pick the other up. It saved petrol and was better for the environment, which was something that Helen claimed to care about, although I had seen her empty her ashtray out of the car window more than once. For me, the main advantage was the stress reduction. If I could avoid battling the city centre traffic a few days a week, I'd put up with any amount of meaningless gossip along the way. A car horn sounded and I looked up to see Helen waving from her car window and pointing at her watch as if to say, "Hurry up". I deliberately sat down out of view and counted to thirty before picking up my jacket and bag and heading towards the car, locking the front door behind me.

"Sorry, Vanessa!" Helen called. "Justin just wouldn't get ready for school this morning." If Helen's excuses were to be believed, then Justin was the most difficult child imaginable. He also seemed to be the unluckiest, having suffered from half a dozen different minor illnesses in the last month alone. It was strange that he never seemed to have any problems on mornings when it was my turn to drive.

"Never mind," I replied, fastening my seat belt. "We should be okay." Helen set off and we joined the rush hour traffic.

"Did you read the report?" she asked me after a minute and I nodded. "What did you think?"

I had been expecting the question, but still I hesitated for a moment. I couldn't say what I really thought, which was that Helen would be lucky to keep her job because the report was very critical of her department. Helen glanced at me.

"I know," she said. "It's bad, isn't it? I knew that Peterson was out to get me."

Carl Peterson was the area manager. The report was the result of a month-long study of the company and we had all been asked to read it over the weekend. I understood why Helen didn't get on with him. Both were determined to get to the top in the company. The difference was that where Helen had no idea how to deal with other people and spent her time finding ways of avoiding blame, Carl was a talented manager.

"I'm sure that's not the case," I said. "He's just doing his job." Helen's lips tightened. "Hmm," she said. After a moment, she continued. "Look. I know I'm not perfect, but it's not my fault. I..."

Just at that moment, a young child on a bicycle pulled out into the road in front of us. I shouted "Look out!" and Helen slammed on the

brakes and turned the wheel quickly. There was a crunch of metal as we hit the back of the car in front, which had stopped at the traffic lights. The boy glanced over his shoulder before quickly pedalling off. Steam began to rise from under the bonnet. Helen hit the steering wheel in anger and frustration. "You okay?" I asked.

"Yes, fine," she replied, and then I saw her expression change from anger to shock and she let her head fall forward onto the wheel. I followed where she had been looking and saw what she had seen. The driver of the other car had got out and was standing by the car, looking at us with a fixed expression. It was Carl Peterson.

1. When Vanessa thinks "Typical Helen!" she implies that ____
 - A. she feels sorry for Helen.
 - B. Helen is often late.
 - C. Helen will be in a hurry.
 - D. they will be late for work.
2. Vanessa mentions Helen emptying her ashtray to show ____
 - A. how much Helen's views on the environment have changed.
 - B. how their arrangement makes a big difference to pollution.
 - C. that she thinks their arrangement is a bad idea.
 - D. that she doubts that Helen really cares about the environment.
3. Vanessa feels that the driving arrangement ____
 - A. gives her and Helen a good chance to chat.
 - B. makes getting to work more relaxing.
 - C. causes arguments between her and Helen.
 - D. helps to reduce the amount of traffic on the road.
4. Vanessa waits before leaving the house to join Helen ____
 - A. to show that she won't allow Helen to hurry her.
 - B. to check that she has everything she needs.
 - C. because she knows they have plenty of time.
 - D. because she has to check that the door is locked.
5. Vanessa believes that Justin ____
 - A. gets ill more than other children his age.
 - B. is used as an excuse by his mother.
 - C. is a difficult child to deal with.
 - D. should learn to deal with his problems himself.
6. Vanessa thinks that Carl ____
 - A. is jealous of Helen's success.
 - B. wants Helen to do his job for him.
 - C. is very good at his job.
 - D. gives everyone too much work to do.

7. In the final paragraph, Helen realises that _____

- A. she and Vanessa will be late for work.
- B. she is lucky to be alive.
- C. the boy is badly injured.
- D. she has made her situation worse.



GIA SƯ CHUNG CƯ

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"Congratulations, Angela! You've won the car, you've won the holiday for two in the Caribbean, and now you're through to the final for a chance to win one million pounds!"

Angela was sure that even the screaming and clapping of the audience wouldn't be able to drown out the sound of her beating heart. She couldn't believe it – the first time she'd ever taken part in a game show and here she was in a potentially life-changing situation.

"Stay calm," she thought to herself. "Don't lose control now."

"Okay, Angela," said Bob, the presenter. "Now, skill has got you this far but, as you know, there's always an element of chance in the final and this week is no exception." Angela nodded. She'd never missed an episode and knew what every round entailed. "So let's have a look at how you could win one million pounds!"

A brightly-coloured board descended from the ceiling of the studio. On the board were three large doors. "Angela, behind one of these doors is one million pounds. Pick the right one, and you're going home today a millionaire. Pick the wrong one and you're going home with..." The audience didn't hesitate to complete Bob's catchphrase for him:

"... just your bus fare!" Even Angela mouthed it, she knew it so well.

"That's right! And we don't want that, do we? So pick a door, Angela, and may luck be with you!" Angela thought carefully before answering.

GIA SƯ CHUNG CƯ

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"The middle door please, Bob," she said finally. "The middle door," repeated Bob. "Okay! But before we have a look, I'm going to open a door that you were wise not to choose. He opened the door on the far left, revealing a picture of a bus ticket. The audience cheered. Angela's heart started beating faster.

"Now, Angela," said Bob. "We're going to be nice to you. You've got another choice to make. You can either stick with your original choice - the middle door - or you can change your decision and opt for the door on the right-hand side. What's it to be?"

As a mathematician, Angela had come across the very same problem at university. Now, here she was, facing it in real life. She couldn't believe her luck. She knew what not many people know, a fact that seemed to contradict all reason and common sense. She did the maths in her head one more time just to make sure she wasn't mistaken. She wasn't. When she'd picked the first door, she had a one in three chance of being right. Looking at it the other way round, she had a two in three chance of being wrong. Those were not good odds. But one of the wrong doors had now been eliminated, so if she changed her choice to the other possibility, she would double her chances of being right, of winning the million. It seemed impossible, but she knew it was true. "What are you going to do Angela? Stick with your original choice or switch to the other door?" "Bob, I'd like to switch, please."

"Angela's going to switch! Let's get this right, Angela. You now believe - you now hope - the million pounds is behind the right-hand door. Is that correct?"

"The right-hand door, yes," said Angela weakly.

"Not the middle door?"

"No, not the middle door."

"What are you going to do if it is actually behind the middle door?" asked Bob. "Cry, probably!" said Angela. The audience laughed, "I'm going to open the door you chose, Angela - the right-hand door. Let's hope there isn't a bus ticket behind it. Here we go!"

Time seemed to stand still as Bob outstretched his arm and began to open the door. Angela had never known a feeling like this. Surrounded by so many people, she felt like the only person in the universe. Here was the moment of truth, and she was not sure she could face the consequences, whatever they were.

- When she got through to the final, Angela couldn't believe that _____
 - her heart was beating so loudly.
 - she'd never taken part in a game show before.
 - the audience were supporting her so much.
 - her life might be about to change completely.

2. The presenter tells Angela that _____.
 - A. she will need some luck to win the money.
 - B. he won't make an exception for her.
 - C. her skill will increase the chances of her winning.
 - D. there is a small chance her skills will be useful.
3. When the presenter doesn't finish a sentence, it's clear that _____.
 - A. the audience has already been told what to say.
 - B. the presenter is unsure exactly what to say.
 - C. the presenter is well known for saying something.
 - D. Angela had to complete a well-known saying.
4. When the presenter opens the first door, _____.
 - A. he knows that Angela has won the money.
 - B. he doesn't know which door the money is behind.
 - C. he knows which door the money is behind.
 - D. he thinks she has made a bad choice.
5. Angela "couldn't believe her luck" that _____.
 - A. her education would help her with this decision.
 - B. the presenter was giving her an extra chance.
 - C. she'd been in the same situation at university.
 - D. she knew far more facts than most people.
6. Angela was absolutely certain that _____.
 - A. the money was behind the right-hand door.
 - B. she could increase her chances of winning.
 - C. she had an impossible decision to make.
 - D. she had to analyse the problem in a different way.
7. As Bob began to open the right-hand door, Angela felt _____.
 - A. there were too many people around her.
 - B. knowing the truth was the most important thing.
 - C. worried by what the future would bring.
 - D. annoyed by Bob being so slow.

GIA SƯ CHUNG CỤ

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