
1st Place

Louisa Montalvo, “37 strangers”, “37 strangers”, Louisa Montalvo.

Thank you contest chair. You're welcome.

“Clear clear!” We have a female unresponsive no pulse.

Contest chair, fellow Toastmasters from around the world and guests!

Two years ago, a horrific automobile accident and that unresponsive female was me. For 6 minutes my heart stopped beating. Best sleep ever.

My co-driver and I had just finished dropping off 88 homeless shelter dogs to a dog rescue in New Jersey. On the the way back, as I sat in the passenger seat of the van. That's when the accident happened.

As I lay there unconscious, 37 strangers in the way of firefighters, EMT Specialists, helicopter Pilots, surgeons, nurses. All came together to try to save my life.

Because death it's so final.

Now I don't recall anything because I was asleep. but those six minutes ah my imagination ran away from me.

And I can almost imagine what happened with me trying to get into heaven probably went like this.

I'm standing there in front of the Pearly Gates St Peter's on his iPad.

I can even see my God in the background playing with his dogs.

Oh and I say my God because I don't want to offend some of you I want to offend all you. St Peter, I'm Louisa Montalvo.

St Peter says, “I don't even have you on the agenda. Hang on.”

He goes back to talk to God and says,

“God, Louisa Montalvo is here and God says, “I don't have anybody for two minutes.” He says, “Wait a minute. St Peter. Was this a car accident?”

St Peter says, “Yes, it was. Louisa Montavo makes sense. Have you ever seen a drive?” “No, no God. she was the passenger.”

“Hm. Louisa, is she the one trying to save my homeless dogs in Texas?”

“Yes, God, that's her.

God leans over, waves at me, and says “Louisa today's not your day.

it's not your time.” He leans over to St Peter's iPad and hits the reset button.

At that moment I'm imagining that.

That's when they take that final attempt to try to get me to save my life.
put the petals on me clear and I start to breathe again.

Now for the next 90 days, I'm in a trauma center and in rehab facility,
questioning my life.

What was my value? What was I worth? I couldn't even walk.

What good was I?

And then, it hit me I'm rolling myself into the gym ready to work out that
final week before I go home. And even though my father said quitters
cry, I started to cry. I wheel myself to my machine. I start working out and this
young handsome man is working out next to me.

Hi, how are you doing? I'm getting married soon. I have Hazard listened to his
wedding plans and then I start to ask myself why is he even here. He looks so
young and fit. and just like that I look down and
realized he's just recently lost both of his legs and yet here he was with a smile
on his face happy he'd been given a second chance and life was not going to
get away from me. He wasn't going to waste a single minute.

Wow, I know a lot of us go through life and sometimes we even question
our value. Why are we even here? But, if 37 strangers were able to see the
value in me?

All their positive input I am now making that part of my output. because you
know we will listen to a stranger that tells us we have value before we listen to
ourselves. It's true.

If you're needing some stranger to tell you you have value?

Allow me to be that stranger. Because if 37 people can come together and put
all this energy into me.

Can you imagine what 1,700 of us could accomplish? All it is is treating each
other other with dignity and worth.

How awesome would it be, if we could all be United like this every day?

If you're ready to hit that reset button, if you're looking for that second
chance, let's hit that reset button.

Are you ready?

Clear? Clear.

[Applause]

****Yoodli's Summary**

- The speaker was involved in a car accident while returning from a trip to deliver homeless dogs to a rescue in New Jersey.
- During the six minutes of unresponsiveness, the speaker humorously imagined a scenario at the gates of heaven.
- Post-accident, the speaker spent 90 days in recovery, struggling with feelings of worthlessness until encountering a young man who inspired a change in perspective.
- The speaker emphasizes the significance of recognizing one's value as seen by others, and the impact of collective positive energy.
- A call to action is made for everyone to treat each other with dignity and consider the powerful outcomes of united efforts.

AI's Evaluation:

Strength

Your storytelling was very vivid and engaging. Nice job!

Growth Area

Your speech could benefit from a stronger conclusion.

Try summarizing your key points more concisely and ending with a call to action, which can leave a lasting impact on your audience.

While your story was compelling and contained a clear message, it could be even more impactful with a structured conclusion. For instance, after sharing the moment with the young man in the gym, you could smoothly transition to summarizing the lessons you learned from those experiences. Emphasize the value and dignity you found through the actions of the 37 strangers and your encounter with the young man.

A more structured closing could follow this format: briefly restate the key takeaway from each segment of your speech, such as the importance of valuing life and the potential we have when we unite for a common cause. Then, offer a powerful call to action, encouraging the audience to treat each other with dignity and to seek their own second chances.

Ending with a memorable quote, rhetorical question, or an evocative image could also enhance the impact. For example, you might finish with, "How will you use your second chance?" This could resonate deeply and leave a strong, lasting impression on your listeners.

2nd Place:

Hannah Chang, “Are you ready”, “Are you ready”, Hannah Chang.
Thank you contest chair. You're welcome.

Oh, as to the question, are you ready? The answer is of course not.

Have you ever wanted to do something, traveling around the world, starting your own business, taking on new challenges, but you didn't feel ready to do it? I know how it feels.

I was born and raised in Hong Kong.

When I was 21, I traveled to Europe for the first time. It is where water is more expensive than wine, where people would kiss you on the cheek, where pineapples on pieces are illegal. Mama Mia. So interesting.

That trip sparked a desire.

I want to live abroad and then my mom said,

“Living abroad? Honey, you don't even know how to cook. Why don't you finish your law degree first?” ...“Yeah, mom, maybe it's too early.”

After 5 years, I finished my Law degree. I got my Lawyer's license. I want to live abroad. Then my sister said, “Exactly, Hannah, you just got your lawyer's license. You should start working first and you still don't know how to cook.” ...Well, make sense.

After five more years I've worked hard for five years,

I want to live abroad and then my inner voice said,

“Hannah, Oh, Hannah, you spent 10 years building your career in Hong Kong. Now you want to give it up. You are crazy?”

Have you ever wanted to do something but the voices around you even the voices inside you told you that you're not ready?

One day I was working in the office when my boss Mr Tong came in.

Mr Tong is a very experienced lawyer, always in a Sleek suit.

He's my role model.

“Hannah, let's have lunch together.”

“Oh sure. Mr Tong.”

So we went to his favorite restaurant. We were eating, talking about our cases when Mr Tong dropped a Bomb.

“Hannah, I want to promote you as a partner of the law firm. Let's start from next month.”

“Mr Tong, thank you so much, but I don't have enough experience.

I'm not ready”

And Mr Tong looked at me like I'm an idiot.

“Hannah, you will never be ready. Just start. You'll find the way.”

“But Mr Tong... you're right. I will never be ready. Just start. You're so right.

Thank you so much, Mr Tong. I quit. I'm moving abroad. “

So I quit my job and moved to Taiwan. Was it easy?

No. But, Mr Tong is right.

Once you start, you'll find the way and you know what?

In Taiwan I met my destiny. It was a hot summer day. I was melting.

So I dashed into the first cafe I found and I was greeted by Oscar, handsome and charming about my age. We started chatting. Suddenly, Oscar look at me straight in the eye.

I saw sparkles of passion and I thought, we just met. It's too fast.

I'm not ready and he asked,

“Hannah, have you heard of Toastmasters?”

“Toast what? Oscar, I don't know how to cook.”

But Mr Tong said, “Just start. You find the way.”

So, I joined and Oscar became my mentor. We have so much chemistry after 6 months.

Finally this time he asked me the question.

“Hannah, would you join the speech contest?”

“I'm not ready. Okay?” But, what did Mr Tong say? So I joined the contest and I regretted it. I had no idea what to say. I feel lost.

I wanted to run away waving this. I didn't feel ready, but I knew I would never be ready. So, I started and here I am.

Is there something that you've always wanted to do and
that you've always wanted to be but you don't feel ready?

Maybe you're afraid of the unknown, afraid that you're not good enough,
afraid that you may fail.

But, the truth is you will never be ready. So don't wait. It's never too early.
It's never too late. Just start. You'll find the way.

Contest Chair.

[Applause]

****Yoodli's Summary**

- The speaker discusses the universal feeling of not being ready to take on big challenges and dreams.
- Personal anecdotes are shared about their journey from Hong Kong to Europe and eventually moving abroad despite self-doubt and external pressures.
- The speech highlights the influence of a mentor, Mr. Tong, who encouraged the speaker to take chances and start without feeling fully prepared.
- The speaker's eventual move to Taiwan led to significant personal growth and new opportunities, including joining Toastmasters.
- The speech concludes with a motivational message urging the audience to take action towards their dreams despite feeling unprepared, assuring them that they will find a way.

AI's Evaluation:

Strength

Your use of personal stories and humor effectively engaged the audience. Nice job!

Growth Area

Your speech could benefit from a clearer structure and emphasis on key points.

Consider organizing your main points into three distinct sections: your dream of living abroad, the challenges you faced, and how you overcame them.

To improve the coherence of your speech, try structuring it using the rule of three. For example, divide your narrative into three parts: your early dreams and doubts, key turning points such as the conversation with Mr. Tong, and the final realization and actions you took. This provides a clear and memorable framework for the audience.

You can also enhance your delivery by incorporating repetition and rhythm. For instance, reiterate the phrase "you'll never be ready, just start" at key moments to reinforce your message. Using dramatic pauses before and after this phrase can help highlight its importance and give your audience time to digest the information.

Lastly, be sure to set a strong closing statement. Instead of ending abruptly with "contest je," consider summing up with a memorable call to action that encourages your audience to take the first step towards their own dreams, such as "Don't wait. Whether it's early or late, just start, and you'll find your way".

3rd Place

Angelie Raven Fitch, "Replaced by Sofia",
 "Replaced by Sofia", Angelie Raven Fitch.

Thank you contest chair. You're welcome.

It's Friday afternoon. I'm heading to the train station to get home to celebrate an amazing, amazing day. At work I'm a global voice of a health care company whose mission is to save lives, and I get to communicate that message every day. It's my dream job. On the way to the train station, my boss, Bob, sends me a text message. Oh, he probably heard about the great job I did at the latest campaign.

So I get to the office and he's got this weird look on his face. He says to me, "We're replacing your voice."

“What? “You're being replaced by Sophia. She's available 24/7. She speaks 19 languages. She costs 1% of what we pay you and shouldn't need health insurance. “ “You're replacing me with a robot?” “She's not a robot. She's our AI agent. You know, artificial intelligence.”

Contest chair, fellow human beings.

I've been replaced by AI. Now I stood in Bob's office Frozen and shocked. I wanted to say, “I've been your voice for six years. How dare you? I've been committed to this company for six years and you replace me with something that's not even human? But, instead, I say nothing. I leave stunned, ashamed.

I walk to the train station and who do I hear? I hear Sophia.

“Train approaching. Please have a ticket ready for inspection” She sounds so fake, doesn't she? And she doesn't even feel guilty that she stole my job. I get home to a stack of bills staring at me.

My anxiety is through the roof. My confidence is Rock Bottom. I drown in my depression for a few weeks. I've been working on my voice my whole life to be able to speak the truth, to speak from my heart and now I'm being replaced. Have you ever felt discarded, thrown away like a piece of a trash. no longer needed?

My best friend Grace, she was worried about me. She said, “You need to get out of the house.” But, everywhere I went, there was Sophia. At the store, “Attention customers, only two cartons of ice cream. At the bank, “Your account has reached 0 dollar. Please get a job.” Really, Sophia. because you just stole mine.

Okay. Grace was really worried. She had to do an intervention. She said, “You need to be around some human beings.” I'm sick of talking about Sophia.” You talking about Sophia. You're coming with me to my writing group. It's storytelling “that.” “Okay.

So, I went there and it was amazing. The people were really warm and friendly and human and one by one each person stood up and told their story. And Lucia's voice trembled as she talked about her daughter going away to college. I could feel how much she loved her daughter, And Kareem's voice cracked as he talked about taking care of his mother who has cancer. I could feel his pain. And AJ talked about holding his son for the first time. I could feel his joy and love. I sat there with tears running down, my cheeks feeling so connected to these people through their voices,

I would never have felt this way, if Sophia told their stories.

And it made me think about the voices in my life that are missing. I would give anything to hear my mother's voice again tell me that she loved me. Are there any voices in your life that you wish you could hear again? Voices that can't be replaced by AI?

I was so grateful to be a part of that group. I left that group with a renewed sense of purpose. Your voice matters. My voice matters.

Well, about a month later, much to my surprise, Bob called me. He wanted to meet for lunch.

Hm. Okay. I get to the restaurant. He looks at me and says,
 “Unfortunately it's not working out with Sophia. “Really Bob?”
 “She's not able to speak from the heart like you can.
 Would you consider replacing Sophia?”

“ I'll consider it. Bob. Let's get something clear.
 I'm not available 24/7. I don't speak 19 languages. I cost a lot more than 1% of what you're paying for Sophia, and I do need health insurance. Fired for being human, rehired for being human. What has this world come to. AI is everywhere. The train has left the station and it's moving fast and I'm all for technology and Innovation.
 AI has done some incredible things. But the human voice, would you agree, cannot be replaced by Machine. The human voice is more than a tool for communication. it's a tool for connection. It's our emotions, our dreams, our stories. And when you speak, you're not just saying the words. You're sharing a piece of your soul and if you listen closely, you can hear the heartbeat under the words.”

Humanity and Technology can exist.

And I believe that the future of the voice in a hundred years will still be the human voice.

What Legacy will you leave with your voice?

Nothing can replace your human voice.

Contest chair.

[Applause]

**** Yoodli's Summary**

- The speaker was replaced by an AI agent named Sophia at their healthcare job.
- The initial shock and depression from the replacement led to feelings of worthlessness and isolation.
- Support from a friend and participation in a writing group helped the speaker regain confidence and purpose.
- Genuine human experiences and emotions shared through voice create deep connections, which AI cannot replicate.

- Eventually, the speaker was rehired because the AI failed to convey the emotional depth needed for the job.
- The speech emphasizes the irreplaceable nature of the human voice in communication and connection.

AI's Evaluation:**Strength**

Your speech was emotionally engaging and relatable, which is a strong point. Nice job!

Growth Area

Your speech had some powerful moments but lacked a clear structure in the middle.

Consider organizing your key points into three distinct sections to provide clarity, cohesion, and ease of understanding for your audience.

The use of vivid imagery and emotions was commendable, as it helped in painting a clear picture for the audience. For example, when you described hearing Sophia's voice at the train station and in various public places, it effectively conveyed your frustration and anxiety. However, the flow between these moments can be enhanced for better coherence. Try structuring your content by grouping key messages into three main points: the initial shock and emotional impact of being replaced, the journey of personal rediscovery and human connection, and finally, the resolution and key takeaway about the irreplaceability of the human voice.

To add more impact and clarity, use triads for emphasis within each point. For instance, when discussing your disappointment, you could say, "I was stunned, ashamed, and defeated," to reinforce your emotions. Additionally, leveraging the power of repetition can further solidify your points. For example, when highlighting human connection, reiterate your main argument in threes: "Our voices convey our emotions, our dreams, and our stories."

Finally, while concluding, emphasize the emotional aspects of human voice with a clear call-to-action. For example, "Remember, the human voice, with its ability to share emotions, dreams, and stories, cannot be replaced. Use your voice to create connections that technology can't."