



# Elite Education Student Service

## Bonus Essay (Brown)

**Open essay: On doing something different: An essay in which clothes DO make the man (into a squid)**

**I AM A GIANT SQUID.** The words stood out, a bold white on my black shirt, as I moved past hundreds of schoolmates in extravagant dresses and expensive suits, attracting a handful of giggles and a significantly larger handful of stares. At the entrance to the hall, the girl behind the counter tried unsuccessfully to hide her laughter as she tore my ticket and told me to enjoy the night. As I grinned and told her I already was, I was slightly surprised to find that I actually meant it.

**This was a night I had been dreading for months. While my peers spent the days leading up to it excitedly discussing the fancy dresses, hairdos and makeup they planned to wear, I cringed inwardly, buried my face in yet another book about mollusks and tried very hard not to think about it. Dressing up in anything more than a T-shirt and jeans or pants has always been a chore to me, and though I had grudgingly accepted formal attire as a necessary evil in my life, it was just not a part of me. I could not imagine truly enjoying my Graduation Night clad in an uncomfortable dress and smelling of makeup and hairspray.**

**“There’s no official dress code, you can wear whatever you want,” pointed out my classmate as she noticed my misery. Still, I knew the reality as well as anyone else; everyone from the Class of 2007 would be dressed to the nines, donning tailor-made dresses and suits, some costing more than the school fees for my entire two years of junior college. The same was somehow expected of me, even by those familiar with my habit of bucking trends and doing slightly unconventional things. This time round, any failure to conform would make me an automatic target for stares and whispers – certainly not the best way of ending the school year.**

**As the dreaded night approached, I toyed with the idea of avoiding the event completely. It seemed the easiest, most obvious way out of the situation. But what a shame it would be to miss this last night together**



## **Elite Education Student Service**

**with my friends of two short years of junior college, simply for fear of deciding to be different!**

**While dressing up is not in my nature, I like to believe that cowardice is even less so. With that belief firmly in hand, I found my final decision straightforward, and any apprehension regarding it was gone by the time I pulled on my very typical attire of jeans and the shirt that very proudly advertised my affinity to a certain favourite cephalopod that December evening.**

**When I finally joined my classmates inside the hall, turning heads for all the wrong reasons, I was mildly surprised by their warm welcome and positive responses to me. To them, I was no different from what I had always been – the same short bookish squid-obsessed girl with no fashion sense and a slightly warped sense of humor. What everyone else was wearing or doing that night had not, could not and would not change that. 12 College Admission Essays That Worked 27**

**“I think you’re really very brave,” said one classmate, after her initial amusement at my attire had passed. Another was far more enthusiastic. “Way to go! The best thing to do is to be yourself!” As the night went on, I noticed that the multitude of stares went beyond mere shock or amusement. In the eyes of both classmates and total strangers alike was a slow, perhaps grudging respect for me and for the crazy decision I had made. It was a strangely satisfying discovery to make.**

**I had more fun that night than I ever expected to have at a formal event. After all, what better way is there to spend Graduation Night than by being yourself (or a giant squid, for that matter)?**