

Harmony Tree International Speech Festival (HTISF)
2025-2026 Set Pieces for Asia Division

FINAL

Prose Reading
Born in 2014-2015

The Lone Husky

by Hannah Gold

Bear's eyes lit up upon spying the peanut butter - the jar she had left as bait on the porch.

Then he stuck out an enormous tongue and licked every last scrap.

Since consuming an entire tub took less than a millisecond,

April rummaged in her bag and pulled out the other jar she had brought with her.

He gobbled that up just as quickly and afterwards let out a big bear burp.

"Excuse you!" said April, as Bear hadn't just burped, he had burped right in her face.

His breath smelled of fish bones, peanut butter and a sprinkling of seal fat.

April spluttered, coughed and giggled all at the same time.

Bear wandered off a few metres, sniffing here and there on the off-chance of any more food,

and April took the opportunity to grab a blanket and a couple of cushions from the cabin.

She positioned there on an untouched patch of snow, and after a few minutes, bear settled next to her.

Leaning into his fur, April felt the snuggest she had all month.

"I knew you would come," she said, rubbing Bear behind his left ear, just the way he liked.

"You know why? Because we're connected. We're connected in a way most people will never understand."

Bear's chin was resting on his gigantic front paws and he seemed content.

The same way April was content when relaxing in front of the fire.

She rested her cheek against his, taking in his musky scent.

A scent that carried a hint of faraway adventure, of something wild and raw.