

Given a scenario, select the most appropriate response.

1. Dinner

A) ~~skip & stay in your room~~

*but I know that's rude
refusing someone else's
time and effort
who cares if I
feel sick to my stomach
I could just—*

B) ~~attend but not eat~~

*but that'll make everyone
feel awkward, won't it?
that or fingers clasped
over my wrist, declaring anorexia
like they know what that means
like I don't actually over*

C) ~~eat~~

*then maybe I'll starve
or vomit or sleep
the rest of the day away*

2. Serving oneself

A) ~~take small portions~~

and then get called rude again

~~B) take portions similar to everyone else's~~

I might just throw up without meaning to

C) take however much you want

in other words, choice A

if I'm feeling generous

3. Chewing sounds

~~A) "do you mind?"~~

actually, wait, sorry

forget that I said that

sometimes I feel so inhuman

the sounds and motions of bodily functions

are so awfully repulsive to me

my hands fly to

~~B) cover ears~~

but then they'll call me rude (again), won't they?

what else am I supposed to do if I can't

~~C) ask them to be quieter~~

sorry, sorry again

that's rude too, isn't it?

especially since they insist they're already so quiet

sometimes it feels like my ears are megaphones

*turned inwards while all the world is screaming—
but nevermind that, dinnertime is family time
time for me to wish that I could
make the voices in my head louder
than all the noises outside
but I should stop complaining, right? instead*

D) grin and bear

*because they told me it's not that bad and not to overexaggerate
because they've worn my ears
and thought my thoughts
so they must understand it all
what else is there for me to do
but simply nod along?*

Thehara Ubayawardena

Pittsford Mendon High School, Grade 12