# Sharleen: Ah’m Shy, by Janet Paisley

Ah’m shy. Aye, ah am. Canny look naebody in the eye.

Ah’ve seen me go in a shoap an jist hoap naebody wid talk tae me.

Things that happen, likesae – yer oot fur a walk

and some bloke whits never even spoke afore goes by

an he’s given ye the eye. See me, ah jist want tae die.

Ah go rid tae the roots o ma hair. Weel it’s no fair, is it?

Feel a right twit. See ma Ma. She says it’ll pass.

‘Ye’ll grow oot o it hen.’ Aye, aw right. But when?

Ye kin get awfy fed up bein’ the local beetroot.

So last time I went oot – tae the disco –

ah bought this white make-up. White lightening it said.

Ah thought, nae beamers the night, this stuff’ll see me aw right.

Onywey, there ah wis, actin it. Daen ma pale an intrestin bit.

White lightening. See unner them flashin lights

it was quite frightnin. Cause ma face looked aw blue.

See, when a think o it noo, it was mortifyin.

Cause they aw thought ah wis dyin, an they dialled 999.

Fine thing tae be, centre o awbody’s attention, me.

They hud me sat oan this chair, bit when they brought stretchers in,

ah slid oantae the flair – an jist lay there.

Ah thought, rule number one, when ye’v made a fool o yersell

dinnae let oan, play the game. So ah let oot a groan an lay still.

Until this ambulance fella feels ma wrist,

an then he gies ma neck a twist – an ye’ll no believe this.

Bit right there and then – he gies me a kiss.

Blew intae ma mooth, honest. God’strewth ah wis gasping fur breath.

Jist goes tae show yer no safe, naeplace these days.

Onyway ah blew right back, that made him move quick.

Fur he says are you aw right, are ye gaun tae be sick.

That’s when ah noticed his eyes – they were daurk broon.

An staring right intae them made ma stomach go roon.

Ah felt kinda queer, an he says, c’mon we’ll get ye oot o here.

Bit ah made him take me right hame – though ah’m seein him again,

the morra. Aw the same, how kin ah tell him dae ye suppose,

that when ye kiss a lassie, ye dinnae haud her nose?

## Learning Resources

### Before Reading

Discuss: What makes you feel embarrassed?

Have you any stories to share about bein affrontit?

### After reading

### Analysis

1. The writer uses imagery in this poem to convey how Sharleen feels. Find two images and explain why they are effective in conveying Sharleen’s feelings.
2. Think of other emotions such as anger, sadness, happiness. List all the Scots expressions you know which are used to describe emotions.
3. Janet Paisley aims to amuse us with Sharleen's story, but Sharleen herself is deadly serious in the telling of her tale. Which lines from the poem are humorous? How does the poet achieve this?

### Writing

**Task 1**

Using Scots, write the story of Sharleen’s latest embarrassing incident. Remember to include lots of detail about how Sharleen feels. This should be written in first person. You can write this as a short story or a poem.

OR

**Task 2**

Using Scots, tell the story of a time when you were really embarrassed. Compare how you felt at the time to how you feel about it now – do you still feel embarrassed, or do you find it funny now? This should be written in first person. You can write this as a short story or a poem.