



The Shopaholic

Characters: May, Rosa, Melody, Shop Assistants and waiter

Synopsis: May cannot stop using her new credit card. She runs up a huge debt. Rosa realizes May has become a shopaholic. Rosa and Melody try to help May break her addiction. But there is only one way. Will May be strong enough to take Rosa's advice?

Scene 1

May: Hey Melody... look what I've got.
Melody: A credit card! Wow May!... when did you get that?!
May: I collected it from the bank today.
Melody: It's so pretty.
May: I know.
Melody: But May... I thought you needed a lot of money to get a credit card.
May: Blank Bank has a special deal at the moment... it's for students... they reckon undergraduates will one day be earning good money and so they are prepared to give us credit cards.
Rosa: Spend now pay back later.
May: Um... yes, Rosa... something like that.
Rosa: And do you have any idea how much interest you have to pay on credit card debt?
May: Um.... just what you normally pay I guess.
Rosa: Wrong... it's more... much more.... you can find yourself paying more than ten percent on what you owe.
May: That's not too bad.
Rosa: Get real May... look, say you run up a credit card bill for five thousand dollars.
May: I won't. Not that much Rosa.
Rosa: You might May.
Melody: If you go on a shopping spree.
Rosa: Exactly Melody... and then each month you'd be paying five hundred

dollars just to service your debt!

May: Five hundred dollars a month? ... don't you mean... um... fifty dollars a month.

Rosa: May... Maths was never your strong point... NO, not fifty... five hundred... ten percent of five thousand is five hundred!

May: But Rosa... I'm not going to spend five thousand dollars.

Rosa: I hope not May but... credit cards can be very seductive... once you realize how easy it is to buy things with them... well.... just don't get carried away May... only use it if you really have to. But if I were you... I'd give it back to the bank.

May: Give back my credit card?!

Rosa: Yes.

Melody: But it's so pretty Rosa.... look... it's got puppies and kittens on it.... they're so cute!

Rosa: The banks make those credit cards look like toys but that's dangerous.... they're not toys... they're lethal weapons.

May: Oh come on Rosa... don't be so serious. Look... it is a pretty card.

Rosa: Yes... pretty dangerous.

Melody: Don't worry Rosa... May will be careful, won't you May.

May: Yes, of course I will... I'm not a baby... I know it's not a toy.

Rosa: Sorry to sound so down on your new card May but... it's just that I don't want to see you run up a huge credit card bill and get yourself into a debt you can't manage.

May: I won't.

Rosa: You promise?

May: Sure I do.

Scene 2

Melody: Don't you just love Fabulous Walk May.

May: Yes I do.... it's so cool that we can just finish our classes at Urban U and then wander out into a shopping paradise.

Melody: Look at that top.

May: That skirt is nice too.

Melody: Shall we go in and try it on?

May: Melody... what's the point.... it's Valenti's... they're stuff is always really expensive.

Melody: I know... but who says you need to buy anything... we can just go in

and take a look.

Brief music

Melody: Oh May... you look fantastic... that top and skirt really suits you.... it makes you look smart yet sexy... the boys will love it.

May: Hmmm... it does look good.

Assistant: It's a new design., the latest fashion from Italy... we only got them in last week and they've been very popular... In fact that top and skirt you have on are the last we have in stock.

Melody: Oh no. The last?

Assistant: Yes, I'm afraid so.

May: Um... how much are they?

Assistant: The top is seven hundred dollars and the skirt is one thousand eight hundred and fifty three dollars.

May: Oh.

Melody: But you look so fantastic May.

May: Yes, but... I haven't got two thousand and fifty dollars on me.

Melody: Yes you have May... you've got much more than that.

May: Have I?

Melody: (Pause) You've got your credit card.

May: Yes but....

Melody: What's your credit limit on it

May: Um... I can't remember... fifty thousand I think.... something like that.

Melody: And this skirt and top only comes to two thousand and something.

May: I know but....

Melody: You can afford it May.

Assistant: Um, excuse me... one of my other customers would like to try that skirt and top on... so if you don't want it....

May: I'll take them.

Melody: Wow May... you lucky thing... you look so cool in those clothes!

Assistant: How are you paying Miss... cash or credit card?

May: Credit card.

Assistant: Thank you Madam.

Brief music

Melody: May, look at those shoes!

May: Which ones?
Melody: Those black ones.
May: The platforms you mean?
Melody: Yes.
May: I've never worn platforms before.
Melody: You'd look good in them.
May: D'you think so Melody?
Melody: Yes. They're push you up at least five inches.
May: Shall I try them on.
Melody: Why not?

Brief music

Assistant: Cash or credit card Miss?
May: Credit card.
Assistant: Thank you Madam.

Brief music

May: Mmm... that iced coffee and iced cappuccino were delicious.
Melody: I love iced coffee and cappuccino.
May: Better get the bill.
Melody: I'll pay half.
May: No it's okay.... Waiter., can we have the bill please.
Waiter: Yes Miss.
May: Um, and can I pay by credit card
Waiter: Certainly Madam.

Brief music

May: Melody... look!
Melody: What?
May: That bag... it's gorgeous!
Melody: The red one.
May: Yes.
Melody: Mmm... it's fantastic... I bet it costs a bomb.
May: Let's go in.
Melody: But um... May....

May: Come on Melody... before someone else gets it.

Brief music

Assistant: And how will you be paying Miss?

May: Credit card?

Assistant: Certainly Madam.

Brief Music

Melody: (Sighs) I'm exhausted!

May: Already? But we've only just begun?

Melody: My legs are aching from all the shops we've been in., and your arms must be aching from all the shopping bags you've been carrying.

May: So let's take a rest somewhere.

Melody: How about calling it a day and going home May.

May: Home? No way! This is too much fun to go home. I know... let me take you for dinner.

Melody: Dinner. Where?

May: Do you like Italian food?

Melody: You know I do.

May: Then let's go to Belleeneez.

Melody: Belleeneez?! You're joking! That's really expensive.

May: Come on Melody... I'll treat you.

Brief music

Waiter: That will be seven hundred and forty nine dollars Miss.

May: Can I pay by credit card?

Waiter: Certainly Madam.

Melody: Wow... I feel stuffed... I don't think I can move.

May: You need some exercise Melody to get rid of some of the calories you've just put on from eating all that pasta.

Melody: Exercise? No way, I just wanna go home and watch the telly.

May: Go home? No way... I can think of something much more interesting.

Melody: What?

May: Shopping of course.

Melody: Shopping? But May... haven't we done enough shopping for one day?

May: You can never do enough shopping Melody.... never.

Brief music.

Assistant: Cash or credit card Miss?

May: Credit card.

Assistant: Certainly Madam.

Melody: I'm exhausted. Please May... can we go home now.

May: Um.... I just want to look in that shop that sells chemical free cosmetics.

Melody: May... we can't carry anything else... look... both of us can just about manage to carry what you've bought already!

May: Um, well... that's true... (sighs)... okay... let's catch a cab and go home. Hey Melody... wanna come back to my place and watch a VCD together?

Melody: A VCD? But May, you haven't got a VCD machine.

May: I know... but we can pop into Castle Electronics and pick one up one the way!

Melody: (Sighs) Now I know what they mean when they say.... 'shop till you drop!'

Interval

Scene 3

Rosa: Hi Melody

Melody: Oh hi Rosa.

Rosa: Have you finished your assignment yet?

Melody: Almost... I just want to do a bit more work on my conclusion... Hey Rosa.

Rosa: Yeah?

Melody: You know that credit card that May's got.

Rosa: She's crazy... I'd never ever have a credit card... especially not as a student... they're too tempting.... it's so easy to go out and spend spend spend... but then... the end of the month comes and your credit card bill and you get a terrible shock.

Melody: You know Rosa... when May first got her card and you started saying all that stuff about how dangerous credit cards could be.... well I

thought you were being a bit stuffy... a bit of a spoil sport.

Rosa: I was concerned about May Melody.

Melody: I know, I mean, I can see that now.

Rosa: I hope she's been using it sensibly.

Melody: Well...uh....

Rosa: What? What is it Melody?

Melody: Well... (Sighs)... I don't think she is.

Rosa: How do you know?

Melody: Well... when she first got it I went to Fabulous Walk Shopping Centre with her.

Rosa: And?

Melody: (Sighs) It was my fault.

Rosa: What was?

Melody: I.... I encouraged her.

Rosa: Encouraged her? How?

Melody: Well.... we were outside Valentini's... and there was this fantastic top and skirt in the window and I said, let's go inside... and we did... and May tried them on and she looked fabulous! So smart yet sexy... they suited her perfectly.

Rosa: Never mind about that... how much did they cost?

Melody: Um... it was... about... two thousand five hundred dollars?

Rosa: Ridiculous! She should never have gone into Valentini's... those clothes are for women who work and have a good income... May's still a student... she can't possibly afford to buy designer clothes.

Melody: But... but she did.

Rosa: Oh no! (Pause) She used her credit card.

Melody: Yes.

Rosa: And YOU encouraged her to go in and try on the clothes.

Melody: Yes. And that's not all Rosa.... it gets worse.

Rosa: Worse? What do you mean, 'worse?'

Melody: After that... she went mad... she bought shoes and bags and cosmetics and we ate in Bellinni's...

Rosa: You ate in Belinni's?! What on earth for? That place is for rich people with plenty of money.

Melody: May insisted.

Rosa: This is terrible. How much did she end up spending?

Melody: I don't know... a lot.

Rosa: Five thousand?

Melody: At least.
Rosa: The interest payments on that is going to be enormous!
Melody: I, I tried to stop her.
Rosa: So you didn't eat with her in Belinni's?
Melody: (Ashamed) Y... yes I did.... but... I didn't want to,
Rosa: Melody... what kind of a friend are you?!
Melody: I know. I feel so bad.
Rosa: You tempt her into a shop encourage her to buy clothes which are far too expensive... you go and eat in a restaurant that only rich people can afford to eat at and and..... (Sighs) Melody, I'm disappointed in you I really am.
Melody: Stop it Rosa... you're making me feel awful.
Rosa: And so you should Melody.... so you should. The question is....
Melody: (Wailing)... what are we going to do?
Rosa: Precisely.
Melody: I wish... I wish...
Rosa: Too late for wishing Melody... (Sighs) I only hope...
Melody: Only hope what Rosa?
Rosa: I only hope May isn't a.....
Melody: A what Rosa? isn't a what?
Rosa: A.... (pause) shopaholic.
Melody: A shopaholic?! What's that?
Rosa: Someone who's addicted to shopping.
Melody: Addicted to shopping?
Rosa: Yes... it's a disease.... you know the way alcoholics can't stop drinking alcohol and workaholics can't stop working... well shopaholics can't stop buying things.... it becomes an addiction.
Melody: But if May's a shopaholic... why hasn't she been on shopping binges before?
Rosa: Because Melody, she didn't have a credit card.
Melody: Poor May.
Rosa: We've got to help her.
Melody: Yes but... how?
Rosa: There's only one way... come on Melody... there's no time to lose.

Scene 4

May: Oh, here' s my mail... Hmmmm... nothing interesting... the usual junk

mail trying to sell me things I don't want.... but what's this?.... it's from Blank Bank... I wonder why they're writing to me? Let's see what's inside.

(SFX: Tearing open envelope)

May: Oh... it's my credit card statement. (Pause) But.... what's this?.... fourteen thousand dollars two hundred and fifty two dollars and twenty cents?! There... there must be some mistake! I haven't spent that much money.... have I?

(SFX: Echo) Have I

Scene 5

Melody: Where are we going Rosa?
Rosa: Fabulous Walk.
Melody: Why? I thought we were looking for May.
Rosa: We are Melody.
Melody: But shouldn't we go to her flat?
Rosa: If my hunch is right... she won't be at her flat... she'll be out indulging her addiction!
Melody: (Fearful) You mean....
Rosa: Yes Melody... (Pause) shopping.
Melody: Oh no... quick, be quick, we've got to stop her... stop her before it's too late!

Scene 6

May: Can I see the silver photo frame you have in the window.
Assistant: Yes Miss. (Pause) Here you are. It's very beautiful... solid silver.... we, um... do have plated silver photo frames which are um... less expensive. Would you care to see them.
May: I like this one.
Assistant: Yes, yes, it is nice... um.... it costs um.... one thousand three hundred and seventy dollars.
May: I'll take it.
Assistant: Um... will that be cash or credit card.

May: Credit card.
Assistant: Certainly Madam
Rosa: STOP!
Assistant: (Confused) I... I beg your pardon?!
May: Rosa! What are YOU doing here?
Rosa: I'm afraid the lady has suddenly changed her mind... she will NOT now be requiring the solid silver photo frame you are holding.
Assistant: But... but she has just agreed to purchase it!
Rosa: Has she signed anything?
Assistant: No.
Rosa: Then she has a right to change her mind... no legal written contract has been made
Assistant: (Angry) B.... but the lady most clearly said that she WANTED it!
Rosa: I'm so sorry, I'm sure somebody else who can afford it will very soon purchase it but for now... good day.... Come along May... let's go and have an inexpensive soft drink at Bendyburgers.
Assistant: (Exasperated) Well!

Scene 7

Melody: The way you spoke to that shop assistant Rosa... you were fantastic.
Rosa: I felt sorry for him... but I wanted to save you May from paying a fortune for a silver photo frame you didn't need.
May: (Sighs) I knew I couldn't afford it... but when I saw it I knew I had to have it. Even as I was walking into the shop a voice in my head kept saying...' no May... don't... stop'... but I just kept on walking and then I heard my... I knew I couldn't afford it but I just had to have it myself asking to see the silver frame and then I heard myself saying I'd buy it.
Rosa: Is there a special photo you wanted to put in it?
May: No.
Rosa: So you were just buying it for the sake of buying it.
May: Yes... yes I was. I just couldn't stop myself.
Rosa: May.... may I ask a personal question.
May: Yes Rosa... what is it?
Rosa: Have you had your credit card bill this month?
May: (Pause) Yes.
Rosa: And... how much did it come to?
May: (Pause) Over.... fifteen thousand dollars.

Melody: Oh no! May! How did you manage that?!

May: It was easy Melody... whatever I saw I just went into the shop and bought it with my credit card.

Rosa: And your bill would have jumped to seventeen thousand if we hadn't stopped you buying that silver photo frame.

May: Yes... yes I guess it would have.

Melody: Seventeen thousand dollars.... May... how are you ever going to pay that back?

May: (Sighs) I don't know Melody. Maybe I can....

Melody: What?

May: (Sighs) It doesn't matter.

Rosa: May.... what I am about to say may upset you... but... it needs to be said.

May: I know what you're going to say Rosa but I can't....

Rosa: (Interrupting) There's no such word as 'can't' Rosa. Now listen, I'm your friend and I want to help you.

May: I know but...

Rosa: (Interrupting) No buts May... Listen... You have a disease... a terrible disease... it's not cancer... or... TB... it's a psychological disease... May...you are a... shopaholic!

May: I'm not!

Rosa: You are, you are! Look at you... a credit card bill of nearly eighteen thousand dollars and you're still out there shopping! Face it! You're addicted!

May: But Rosa....

Melody: She's right May... Rosa's right.... I'm afraid you ARE a shopaholic and I feel so guilty... if only I hadn't encouraged you to buy that skirt and top... that's what started it all... I should have stopped you... stopped you before it was too late!

Rosa: It's never too late Melody.

Melody: But what can we do... how can we help May?... if she's a shopaholic she'll just keep buying and buying and getting into more and more debt until... until... until...

Rosa: May.... I'm going to ask you to do something that is going to be very very hard for you. (Pause) Look... I've brought along a pair of large kitchen scissors.

Melody: Rosa! What are THEY for?!

Rosa: For May to cut up her credit card.

May: Please Rosa... don't ask me to do that... I can't.
Rosa: You can and you must May.
May: But... it will be like cutting off my own finger.
Rosa: It's got to be done.... it's the only way to stop your shopping addiction in its tracks. (Pause) Now take the scissors. May... take them.
May: (Emotional) It's okay for you two isn't it!
Rosa: Okay in what way May. Speak. Let it all out.
May: Well.... you've got Adam chasing after you and Melody... you've got Max drooling over you... and who have I got?... nobody... nobody to care for me...take me out... buy me little gifts and dinners.... Rosa I NEED that credit card...it helps to fill the void.
Rosa: (Pause) (Sighs) I was worried that might be the case. (Sighs) Okay May, I DO have Adam and Melody DOES have Max but... who knows what the future will bring.... there could be some lovely guy waiting for you just around the corner... I might split up with Adam... well... we're not even properly back together again... and Melody and Max may part.... life is about change May.... but some things don't change May.
May: Like what Rosa?
Rosa: Like my friendship for you and Melody's friendship for you.
Melody: That's right, I'll always be your friend May... always.
Rosa: So... as your friends... who love you and want the best for you please May... take this scissors and cut that pretty little credit card all covered in pussy cats and puppies.... into pieces.
Melody: (Pause) Go on May... you can do it... I just know you can do it.
May: (Pause) Rosa..... give me the scissors.
Rosa: Here.
May: Thanks.
Melody: Do it May.... cut it up.... cut that piece of plastic into a thousand pieces and toss it to the wind!
May: (Inhaling) Here goes.

(SFX) Scissors cutting up the plastic card again and again)

Rosa: (Over the sound of the scissors) Fantastic May.
Melody: (Whooping) She's doing it... she's doing it!
Rosa: Now May... see where that Bendyburger trash can is.... go and fling those tiny pieces of plastic in with all the greasy left over fries and bits

of burger bun.

May: Thank you Rosa... thank you Melody.... I feel... liberated.

Rosa: Good. Now off you go and throw away that plastic and when you come back.... we'll talk about how you are going to pay off your debt.

The End