



## You're A Good Man Charlie Brown - Synopsis

A program note says that the time of the action is "an average day in the life of Charlie Brown." It really is just that, a day made up of little moments picked from all the days of Charlie Brown, from Valentine's Day to the baseball season, from wild optimism to utter despair, all mixed in with the lives of his friends (both human and non-human) and strung together on the string of a single day, from bright uncertain morning to hopeful starlit evening.

It seems to start off all right. After some brief comments on the nature of his character by his friends, Charlie Brown is swept into their center by a rousing tribute of only slightly qualified praise, in the song *You're a Good Man, Charlie Brown*. He is then left to his own musings as he eats his lunch on the school playground, complicated unbearably by the distant presence of his true love, the "little redheaded girl," who is always just out of sight.

True love also seems to be the only unmanageable element in Lucy's solid life, which we discover as we watch her try to bulldoze her way through to her boyfriend's sensitive, six-year-old musician's heart, in *Schroeder*. The little scenes then begin to accumulate, and we learn that Lucy's little brother, Linus, is thoughtful about many things but fanatical when it comes to the matter of his blanket; that Patty is sweet and utterly innocent; and that Charlie Brown's dog spends much if not most of his time thinking of being something else—a gorilla, a jungle cat, perhaps a handsome trophy or two—but that mostly his life is a pleasant one—Snoopy.

The events continue to trickle on. Linus enjoys a private time with his most favorite thing of all—*My Blanket and Me*, Lucy generously bothers to inform him of her ambition-of-the-moment, to become a queen with her won queendom, and then Charlie Brown lurches in for still another bout with his own friendly enemy—*The Kite*.

Valentine's Day comes and goes with our hero receiving not one single valentine, which brings him to seek the temporary relief of Lucy's five-cent psychiatry booth—*The Doctor Is In*. We then watch as four of our friends go through their individual struggles with the homework assignment of writing a hundred word essay of "Peter Rabbit" in *The Book Report*.

Act Two roars in with Snoopy lost in another world atop his doghouse. As a World War One flying ace he does not bring down the infamous Red Baron in today's battle but we know that someday, someday he will. The day continues. We learn of the chaotic events of the *Very Little League's Baseball Game* as Charlie Brown writes the news to his pen pal. Lucy is moved to conduct a personal survey to find out just how crabby she really is, and all the group gathers for a misbegotten rehearsal of a song they are to sing in assembly.



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It is supertime, and Snoopy once more discovers what wild raptures just the mere presence of his full supper dish can send him into. And then it is evening. The gathered friends sing a little about their individual thoughts of happiness and then they go off, leaving Lucy to make a very un-Lucy-like gesture: she tells Charlie Brown what a good man he is.

None of the cast is actually six years old. And they don't really look like Charles Schulz' "Peanuts" cartoon characters. But this doesn't seem to make that much difference once we are into the play, because what they are saying to each other is with the openness of that early childhood time, and the obvious fact is that they are all really quite fond of each other.

-Clark Gesner

THE END