

The Most Important Talent of All

Upon the immense clouds, a divine place called Heaven towers over the Earth and judges the living. Not all of heaven judges, it is separated into departments run by angels. Some angels create a baby's appearance. Others determine their talents. These angels work at the Supreme Talent Department. They have a massive responsibility.

Hello, I'm Harmony an angel who works at the Supreme Talent Department. Currently, I'm doing an apprenticeship. My tutor is nice deep down even though she must be tough on me. "When you complete your apprenticeship, you will end up just like me, a hard-working, respected woman," she reminds me daily. She is my inspiration. My goal is to be like her.

Today I'm going to forge a baby's talents. After all these months of apprenticeship, I am ready. And not one baby, but two babies. I can't wait to give these twins talents!

As I enter the pod through the marble doors, the smell of jasmine with a hint of hope blasts me. There they are, the orbs shining and dancing. Blue, purple and gold swirl in the spheres. A loud 'bang' echoes as the doors shut behind me. It is the only sound in the room.

Suddenly, a marble conveyor belt starts moving. Slowly, slowly I start to see two delightfully decorated cradles with two petite babies sleeping inside. I am so excited! I can't help squealing with excitement! But I squeal a bit too loudly and both babies scrunch up their faces and let out a dreadful wail.

Quickly, I try to quieten the babies, so the supervisors do not come in. I glance at my watch. I am running out of time! I gawkily dash across the room and grab one of the orbs with caution, then steadily sway across the squeaky marble floor. I insert the orb into the vacuumed slot with one of the babies. Then a tiny machine starts to grind the single orb. My sandals flip flop against the marble floor as I retrieve another orb, then carelessly place the orb into the SAME slot with the SAME baby! I don't realize my mistake.

I feel so proud of myself! I think I have successfully forged talents for two babies but I have given two doses of orb talent to just one baby. I strut down the hallway with my head held high and a proud grin from ear to ear. I feel a bit offended that I didn't get a "congrats!" or a "well done", but that is fine.

Ten years later...

Today is my ten-year anniversary as manager at the Supreme Talent Department. I am a hard-working respected woman just like my mentor predicted. I have a large penthouse with spectacular views of the misty clouds beneath, and a beautiful office decked with marble. I get myself ready for a big day.

After reviewing and approving all the other employees on my check list, I must do a self-review. I find it a bit annoying that we must watch replays of our own work. All my work is perfect ... hold on ... I gasp, "how c-could this be?!" I shake my head in denial and re-watch countless times.

I quickly search through the 'Kid Cams' to see the effects of my orb mess-up. I see a poor, worthless, introvert, small girl with a face full of doubt. Her name is Anne, plain Anne with

no talents. She is slouched in the back seat of a car driving to her twin's solo eisteddfod. Her twin is beautiful! She is intelligent, athletic, humorous and very optimistic, the type of person you would want to be friends with for life. Her parents, Jon and Irene adore her. Her name is Angelica. She is the golden child.

Angelica and her parents dash into the eisteddfod hall, up the stairs and around the corner, leaving poor Anne behind. When Anne finally finds the auditorium and takes a seat, the parents nervously laugh and say, "There you are our little Anne bug! Wherever have you been?" People are watching so they play the role of loving parents. Anne just softly smiles and shrugs her shoulders.

After all the perfect girls gracefully sway and swing their elegant bodies, the host calls, "Angelica Woods". As the lights dim, Angelica's refined silhouette prances across the stage, her face lights up in the soft yellow light. She swings and sways, and prances and dances, twirls and swirls. The music makes Anne want to go and dance with her, but she can't. The sisters are so different. It is difficult to believe that they are twins.

Suddenly, I realise that I must fix this. I can't let Anne continue to feel second best. Angels are forbidden to change the destiny of the humans they forge. If I try to change Anne's destiny, I will be redundant and then thrown out of Heaven. Even so, I rush to the pod and reach for an orb. I make sure to get an orb that is bursting with purple, blue and gold. I race out and onto the clouds. I spot Anne coming out of the eisteddfod and I drop the orb in her direction. Suddenly there is a glorious beam of light. Am I dying? I lose consciousness...

I wake up in the hospital in Heaven. I am being cared for by a gentle nurse angel. I ask her what happened. She explains that, even though I broke a very important rule, I showed complete compassion, which is the most important talent of all. I will not be dismissed from Heaven after all. The angel nurse shows me a clip of Anne. I can't believe my eyes! She is holding hands with Angelica as they stand proud, both wearing golden dance medals. A tear trickles down my aching face, my battered hand instinctively placed on my trembling chest... there she is.