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Chapter One Lily tries out for the chorus

It was Mother Angel's birthday. All week at Amelia's Angel Academy there had been mysterious whisperings and a great amount of secrecy. Special events were being planned for the grand occasion.

As Lily sat in the Great Hall of Testing waiting to try out for the Heavenly Chorus, she wondered if Mother Angel knew what was happening. She seemed to know everything. But perhaps she was too busy writing down her memories to hear the secret sounds of the surprise party.

In spite of feeling excited, Lily also felt anxious. She desperately wanted to be part of one of the special events, but so far it hadn't happened.

She had tried out for the Juggling for Joy team, but the balls were too big. They kept landing on her head, instead of in her hands. Then she had been hopeful of being part of the Angel Acrobatics Troop but all she had managed to do was trip up the other angels and get in everyone's way.

So joining the Heavenly Chorus was her last possible chance, even if her throat did feel a bit scratchy.

Since waking, she had hardly spoken a word. Tisa thought she was being silly, but Lily hoped that by not making a sound her throat would be fine by the time she had to sing.

"Lily."

At the calling of her name, Lily walked into the centre of the hall. She stood in front of the panel

of three angels. They had all been at Amelia's Angel Academy for a long time and had voices like silver slipping through silent waters. At least, that was the way Lily liked to think of it.

They all smiled at Lily.

"Just take your time," said Angel Roxy, who had hair the colour of fire.

"Pretend we aren't here," said Angel Bo, gazing at Lily with deep green eyes.

"Remember," said Angel Carol, "we're on your side."

Lily nodded. For her song, she had picked her favourite. It was called 'To the Moon and Back'. She had learnt it at Bossy Boots' Boarding House before coming to the academy to learn how to be an angel.

She took a deep breath and then opened her mouth ... but all that came out was a small and desperate squeak.

Lily tried again.

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The sound was even smaller, and the squeak



even more desperate. She heard Tisa giggle, along with the other angels waiting for their try-out.

"Perhaps you would like to try a bit later?" said Angel Bo.

Lily heard someone whisper about how she would make a good mouse. Swallowing hard, and trying to soften the soreness in her throat, Lily opened her mouth to have one last try.