



Birthday Present

Centre yourself by taking a deep breath. Do this once more and imagine it is your birthday. And it is going to be the best birthday ever. Be as a little child, eagerly wanting to see what gifts you will get, what celebration has been organised for you. For this is your special day, a day marking your entrance into this world.

Now instead of the gifts being handed to you, they have been hidden in the garden. For you to find. You have been told there are seven presents. So let's go find them. Go out into your garden, filled with sunlight, happy insects and coloured with many flowers. A bird chirps from the tree at the bottom of the garden. You follow this noise and discover your first present. Up in the tree. Taking it down from the branch, you unwrapped it. It is a bag of lollies. Multi-coloured chocolate balls called Happy Lollies. You turn the bag over and on the back it reads, whenever you feel sad, take one and you will be happy again. You try one and yes, you do feel happier than before.

Looking around, you spy an odd colour in the red flowered garden bed. Go check it out. It's your second gift. This one is a little bit bigger. Opening it you discover it's a pair of shoes. Those shoes you have been wanting for ages. And they feel so light. You turn the shoes over and see a brand name on the bottom. It reads Fairy Shoes, so You can always dance through life. You put them on. They are a perfect fit. Comfortable and strong, they dance you to your next gift. This one is smaller and shaped like a box. Ripping the paper off, you see a new watch. Silver and blue, you see there are words in the watch face. Peering closer, you see inscribed the name Perfect Timing Always. Oh you can definitely do with this. And immediately put the watch on.

Now where is the next gift? Let's try the other flowerbed. And yes, there is another one. Picking it up, this one feels rather heavy. Being careful not to drop it, you unwrap it. It looks like a jar of spinach. What sort of gift is this? You hate spinach. You look its label. It reads, The Power to do Whatever Your Heart Desires. PS It just looks like spinach, it will taste of whatever you like most!

Grateful that your jar of spinach is not going to taste of spinach (unless you actually like spinach), you continue your searching. A butterfly floats past you. You watch it flit across the grass and then settle on a flower. Admiring it, you suddenly realise you can see another gift. Crossing the lawn, you take this gift from its hiding place. Opening it, you find a set of angel wings. Custom built for you, you know these give you the Freedom to Fly Wherever You Want. You put them on and prepare to test them out. But then you realise that you have not found all the gifts yet. Flying is going to have to wait til later on.

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Searching round and round you find one more. This one was much better hidden. Once more, take the wrapping off and see what you have. It's a cap. And the logo stitched into it reads The Cap of Contentment. You go to put it on and something falls out. It's a tiny thorn, with a set of instructions. To be placed inside the Cap of Contentment, this Thorn of Complacency will activate only if you become too blasé about life. It must be left in the cap at all times. You decide you do not want this thorn and toss it on the ground. You want the cap though, so you put it on. Or should I say, you try to put it on. For the cap will not sit on your head, in fact it seems to be repelled by your head. But you want that cap. You try again, but still no luck. This cap is not going to go on your head. Then you remember the thorn and its instructions. Quickly you search where you threw it away. Look again, and again, until you find it. And once finding it, slip it inside the cap band. It disappears into the fabric. Now try the cap on. And this time it settles nicely and stays put. You smile. A smile of happiness and contentment.

Now there is one gift left. Where have you not looked in this garden? You have checked all the flowerbeds, searched the trees, looked under all the bushes. What about the outdoor garden furniture? Not there? I suggest you look again. And yes there is another present. Unwrapping this one, you find you have been given a pair of sunglasses. In the latest style and in your favourite colour. Put them on.

And suddenly you see you are not alone. Your friends are here to celebrate your birthday with you. Old friends and new friends. And some you don't even know yet. And your family is here too. But none of the old animosities exist anymore. Everyone is smiling and laughing, wishing you Happy Birthday. All is joy and fun and happiness. A table is laid with party food. And as you look round with your new sunnies, you see the Life and Beauty in Everything. You can even see the garden fairies and flower pixies and the tree gnomes. All celebrating, all happy for you, all happy with you. You are going to wear these sunglasses always. Feel the fullness in your heart, breath in the love of this group. Sing with the happiness of being healthy and alive. Dance the joy of living, of loving the beauty in others. Try your wings out and zoom around the garden. Impress your friends, and discover they can do this also. Oh what fun you can have together. Yes, this is the best birthday out. Cool gifts, great friends, happy families. Fill yourself with this feeling, keep your gifts with you. And only when you are ready, gently come back to the room.