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To open my first book by Adam Grant and find immediate reassurance by Sheryl Sandberg that I too can be an original without an extraordinary sense of creativity is a welcoming sentiment. Grant himself attests in his very first chapter that being a revolutionary doesn't require being born with remarkable genes. He characterizes what it means to be an original with a simple willingness to act upon ambition despite the fear that comes with stepping outside of one's comfort zone.

Originality doesn't necessarily mean coming up with a radical, world-changing idea. What now in 2020 seems like a simple solution to a common problem turned four college students a decade ago into founders of one of the most innovative companies in the world. The creators of Warby Parker demonstrated their ambition to make change by taking their alternative to a simple problem - overpriced eyewear - and running with it. Through breaking away from the norm despite the potential risks they became originals, trusting their guts and consequently raking in billions of dollars while revolutionizing the eyewear industry as a whole. Warby Parker's success highlights the power of ambition and how a willingness to act upon it is a necessary pillar of becoming an original.

Risk is not foreign to any entrepreneur. It's a scary concept that has dissuaded geniuses from changing the world. However, it's a discomfort that any original must become familiar with. Grant acknowledges the notion that revolution and risk perpetually

come together, yet he fails to discourage his readers through presenting the concept of a "risk portfolio". He proposes that one can be an original in a certain area while maintaining stability in the rest of their life, and by this logic he suggests that one can do the same with risk. To retain a risk portfolio is a source of extra courage and fear mitigation that can help an individual maintain a stronger grip on both their ambition and originality.

As a student who's retained high pride in her academics and achievements, I feel induced by the concepts explored in the first chapter of *Originals* to view my role as a student in a different light. From elementary to high school, I've erred on the side of "teacher's favorite" - always abiding by the rules and openly, as Grant suggests, hindered by "achievement motivation". My friends from high school would always refer to me as the "smart" one, but I have continuously insisted that I'm no genius, I just know how to get good grades. Although familiar with risk, I see that I tend to shy away from it. Rubrics and clear structured guidelines are my salvation. While I've never settled for anything less than my best work, Grant has coaxed me to wonder what I could do if I confront my boundaries and stand out as a student in a different way. For me, what's safe is what I know will check all the boxes on the rubric. Already, Grant's work has elicited my first *vuja de* moment and led me to wonder how I can continue growing as a student and beyond. The only significant impact of risk in my life is my persistent aversion to it, but I hope that as I delve deeper into *Originals* I'll learn how to embrace it through shaping my individuality and originality. Now that I'm a college student leading a new life in an

entirely new state, I feel empowered to discover the facets of myself that I previously never felt the need to uncover.

The first chapter of *Originals* defines an original as one that has struck the perfect balance of ambition and risk management. Change cannot and will not occur if one isn't willing to explore the intimidating world beyond conformity. This concept is especially essential in our current pandemic-dominated society, where the norm itself is ambiguous and digitalization is making a necessary exponential leap. Our society exists in a state of uncertainty but after my first encounter with Grant, I believe that makes it the ultimate time to take a chance, cling onto ambition, and overcome the risks to take the first step towards becoming an original.