

## **Journey Towards Hope**

'Come on, faster' said Encyclopaedia of Humanity. She had a meeting to catch. Maybe for the first time in her life, she cared about something other than herself and this was even surprising for her. Throughout her life, she had always treasured herself the most. She was right about it of course. Because she was very special. Very unique. Six stars on the edge of her red cover made her even flashier; until she found out that she had a Second Volume. Let alone thinking how great this second volume can be like her, she didn't even want this thought to cross her mind. She was deadly curious about the Second Volume. Without this curiosity, she wouldn't even step out from her shelf and just keep on watching people around flattering her. She needed to hear that she was more perfect than anyone because compliments from the people around her were not enough anymore.

They made an appointment with the Second Volume to meet at a book fair in England. She needed a friend, no, no actually an assistant for the ride. Because nobody could be a friend of her. As an assistant, she chose Little Seagull. She offered food to cover his needs for whole year but he refused it for the sake of their friendship and agreed to go to England with her. For her, all of these was nothing but fawning. Who would do someone a favour at no charge? The wind was getting stronger. Dark clouds meant the rain was coming. Little Seagull started to fly up to the sky with the rain. As the rain got stronger, he flew higher and higher. First Volume who couldn't make sense of it, thought that they should have found a shelter instead. When she was about to mention it, the rain stopped. What happened has happened, a few of her pages were torn apart. She carefully put her torn pages back in between other pages. She was very upset about it. Because she had two principles in life. The first one was to take good care of her pages. And the second one was to obey the information on them strictly. Still, First Volume was hoping to glue the pages back. Unfortunately, on top of everything, she wasn't able to see them because of her eyes gotten wet by the rain. She wondered for a moment. Why did the rain stop so suddenly? She asked Little Seagull what happened. The answer was very surprising. She quickly wiped her eyes and looked up to the sky. They were over the clouds, indeed. For some time, they kept flying over the clouds.

As the sun rose, a visual feast mixed with red, yellow and orange colours emerged marvellously in front of them. After a while, she looked down and realised the Democracy Park. With its rich vegetation and giant statues, it was under their feet. People having picnic, strolling with bicycles and lying on the grass and sunbathing were all around the park. Peace was everywhere in this park. Black and white people formed a colourful scenery and the songs in different language were changing the mood of the park. What took the attention of the First volume mainly was the people who got on a platform telling about something to the people around them. This was a place where the freedom of speech was practiced in real terms. The number of people talking in different languages were quite high. But this wasn't a problem. Tolerance kept them together. Everywhere was decorated because of the Democracy Day. Traditional music was accompanying the riot of colours. Now the fireworks were leading the way at night. The streets were full of spirit. It was as if perfume of happiness was sprayed everywhere. Besides, wasn't happiness contagious?

Finally, they reached the book fair. When First Volume was about to go in, she looked back for one last time. Little Seagull has fallen to the ground. She asked him what happened. Little Seagull said he was sorry and then told her what happened. Even though he knew he couldn't handle such a long journey, he took the risk for it. Now he was about to pay the price. First Volume looked daggers at Little Seagull. He did it again. He put his life in danger for her. "It seems like you forgot

why I don't talk to you," said First Volume with anger. Little Seagull said that he remembered perfectly and let the memory play in his mind.

*It was the time when First Volume curiously wished to do magic. She wanted to make a happiness potion. A pinch of love, two spoons of peace, a heart full of hope and enough tolerance to sprinkle around were needed to make it. And I was looking for them at the cost of my life. Except one ingredient, I found all of them inside of a chest that my grandfather, who came to this country years ago, entrusted with me. What I couldn't find was a heart full of hope. I decided to take it from my own personality. As I took them away, my energy of life was draining. First Volume came to me and shaped me up. She told me that all creatures were alive as long they kept on hoping.*

As Little Seagull thought about these, people started to gather around him. Besides, who would turn a blind eye to a creature dying on the street? One of them took a step forward and checked the seagull's pulse and said he was sorry and there was nothing they could do for him, as he stepped back. As Little Seagull breathed his last, he said "Take care," to First Volume. First Volume's heart smashed and for the first time in her life, she shed a single teardrop. She tore one of her pages about solidarity and covered Little Seagull with it, and at that moment altered her principle about never to tear her pages. Protecting the loved ones had just become one of her principles.

She left Little Seagull behind and entered the book fair. Wasn't it her aim after all? Thus, she was going to do what she wanted. She was going to meet Second Volume. She looked around. Books were everywhere. As she kept on looking, someone very similar to herself caught her eye. Did she look like that from outside? After watching her for a while, she approached and met Second Volume. She was very curious about this volume which was so similar to her and made her come here from kilometres away. She told her own story to her, shared her expectations for the future, heartaches, hopes. She couldn't help but show her astonishment when she heard similar things from Second Volume.

She was deeply touched by the fact that their emotions and dreams were the same even though there were distances between them and differences between their living spaces and climates. "What is different is only the places," she thought. As she murmured "Why shouldn't we ignore the distances keeping us apart?" her eyes locked onto something. She focused on the bump under the tree across her. Comprehending that Little Seagull was buried there, Second Volume hugged First Volume. She didn't like hugs but at that moment, she needed it. Both of them had six stars shaped as a semicircle on their edges. Stars, together shaped as a circle and representing the unity of Encyclopaedia of Humanity, dazzled with the symbol of perfection that is number twelve. At the same moment, same thing crossed both of their minds. Was there a Third Volume? ....Why not?...