

Name: Saanvi Rout

Entry for sidekick competition!

Round Square Discovery Hero: Inquisitive Indu

Sidekick name: Nulla (derived from Latin word for none- nullus)

Appearance: no fixed form, but when observed directly it distorts- depending on what the viewer is wondering. It's made up of a foggy cloud like structure.

Characteristics that enable it to help the main hero on their discovery :

- (1) whenever the hero is stuck, Nulla can drag them into their own thoughts, which consists of their subconscious questions
- (2) In moments of overconfidence Or other similar feelings, Nulla activates an energy where known

facts dissolve, making the hero forget pre-established truths or facts- to help them view things from a new angle

(3) Nulla is not the helper in the traditional sense, but rather a complication that serves the deeper truth, and pulls the hero away from easy answers and into unknown thoughts, where creativity, critical thinking, open-mindedness are encouraged.

Catchphrase: None, since Nulla never speaks- just provokes the hero through her energy.

Story:

There was no door.

Indu ran her fingers along the granite walls, repeating the same path for the third time. Nothing. No seam, no handle, no secret switch. Just a round chamber lit by a dim, sourceless glow. It was silent. Too silent—like the world had folded in on itself.

Indu had followed every clue through the ancient map of the Labyrinth of Thought, solved every clue, answered every riddle. But here, at the supposed “end,” there was only... this.

Indu dropped to the floor, back against the cold wall, and exhaled sharply.

“So this is it?”

A question, yes—but not the right kind. It was the question of someone reaching for a conclusion. And in this place, she assumed, conclusions were dangerous.

From the corner of her eye, Something moved.

The air in front of her darkened, thickening like oil in water. She felt a pause, and then a shape emerged.

A floating, shifting shadow curled into a question mark.

The thing blinked. The shape didn’t stay still- it kept in wavering. As soon as Indu’s eyes focused, it

morphed. Now it looked like a spiral. Then, a key. Then... a face she almost recognized.

It made no sound. But it watched. Or perhaps, it waited.

“Are you... alive?”

No answer.

It came closer, leaving no trail, casting no shadow on the floor. Almost like it existed and didn't exist at the same time. Just the feeling of something being asked without words. The wheels in Indu's mind turned, as if someone had galvanized a machine that was close to rusting.

Suddenly, the walls vibrated. The room twisted.

And Indu was no longer in the chamber.

Instead, Indu stood in a vast, infinite space filled with floating islands—each suspended by nothing, each pulsing with a dull light. One island held an oversized book, another had a staircase that looped in on itself, and the third a mirror showing not a

reflection, but a younger version of herself asking a teacher why stars existed.

The thing hovered beside her—now a ribbon, now a clock with no hands, now an ink cloud stretching toward the nearest island.

“Is this real?” Indu asked.

No answer. But the question—that kind of question—did something. It wasn’t a conclusion- it was a solution. A path lit up under her feet, leading to the island with the book.

She stepped forward, and the second her foot touched the book, the words vanished.

Blank.

She reached for the book. It snapped shut.

Another sound.

She blinked—and forgot.

What... was a book?

The idea, the word—it slipped from her mind like water does through fingers.

Panicked, she turned to the shape.

It floated calmly.

And then, a memory returned—not of the book, but of the fear of not knowing. The confusion. The blankness. A voice inside her whispered, not in fear but in wonder:

“What if I never knew anything for certain?”

The island shifted beneath her, and suddenly she saw it:

Words returning—but rewritten.

Not answers.

Questions.

What if books weren't meant to be read but rewritten? What if the stars didn't burn—they remembered? What if silence could be louder than sound?

Every question reshaped the landscape.

The ink-cloud thing curled around the hero, as if approving.

Nulla.

The name didn't come from the shape. It wasn't told to her. It bloomed in her mind.

Nulla was not here to solve things.

Nulla was the unsolved.

A companion not of logic or facts, but of wonder. The kind of presence that made you tilt your head at a puddle and wonder if it might be the entrance to another world.

Indu turned back to the endless sky of floating islands.

“So this isn’t the end,” she murmured.
“It’s the start of better questions.”

Nulla shimmered, the shadowy question mark changing , becoming softer at the edges softly.

The original chamber returned, walls still blank—but no longer intimidating.

Indu walked toward the far wall.

Paused.

And asked—not how to leave, but:

“What if the wall never existed?”

The stone vanished like mist.

And above it—a sky of dust waiting for a mind brave enough to catch it.

Nulla drifted beside her.

And together, they stepped forward—into the great unknown, where answers mean less than the courage to ask again.