

# VIGNETTES

## Beginnings

- by Judith Nolan ©

*“To give pleasure to a single heart by a single act is better than a thousand heads bowing in prayer.”*

- Mahatma Gandhi

### Rebecca ...

Rebecca knew she'd seen the book somewhere. She just had to find it.

But the random chaos of Father's library meant the book she remembered seeing the last time she'd helped her mother dust and tidy the chamber could now be anywhere. Father had a habit of disorganising what had just been neatly organised into some semblance of order, simply because he could. He hated his things being touched, so the roster system of household chores they all worked under often clashed with his sense of necessary disorder.

Everyone knew nobody was allowed to touch his chess set. Often he and Vincent would leave a game half-completed and no one dared to disrupt it.

But Rebecca wasn't interested in chess. The game bored her. What she wanted more than ever was that elusive book. Father had said he certainly had no use for a book on the art of candle-making. He couldn't even imagine how he came to possess it in the first place. He said it was hers if she could find it.

Rebecca had smiled happily and thanked him. Even at seven years of age she'd already determined that she would succeed her mother as the candle-maker for their world Below. She already helped with the craft after her schoolwork had been completed. But her burgeoning sense of style and flair sometimes clashed with her mother's more ordered sense that candles were simply a utilitarian item that didn't need any embellishment.

Rebecca strongly disagreed. It had been her idea to colour the latest batch of Winterfest candles into their three shades of white, yellow and red. She was very proud of the way they'd turned out. Everyone had said how pretty they looked and what a great idea. Her recent success only made Rebecca more determined to find the book and make use of its many new and radical ideas.

“There you are.” she breathed finally, leaning across the several piles of Readers Digests blocking her reach. Her fingers just managed to seize the candle book before the entire stack decided to give way, tumbling her to the floor with several more piles of books cascading down on her head.

“What on earth?” Father's exasperated voice cut across the din of tumbling books. “Who is that and what are you doing in here?”

"It's only me." Rebecca fought off the offending books, surging to the surface, clutching her own prize in triumph. "I found it!"

"I can see that," Father replied drily. "And ten year's worth of Digests as well." He shook his head in despair, but his blue eyes twinkled at her boundless enthusiasm. "Well, I guess they needed tidying anyway. And since you went to so much trouble to find it, the book is certainly now yours."

"Thank you." Rebecca clutched the book to her chest excitedly. "You won't be disappointed. I am going to make you proud." She closed her eyes on a deep sigh. "I am going to make such pretty candles."

"I already am proud of you. Your Winterfest candles were a great hit." Father ruffled her mop of blond curls. "Maybe we need to go and have a chat with your mother. We'll see just what you can be allowed to create since it means so much to you."

"I'd like that." Rebecca nodded. Her world was secure and her future full of twinkling candlelight. She couldn't wait to begin.

END