"The Shard of the Sea"

In an era where everything seemed perfectly at balance, where black and white were one, existed Nexion. A perfect body of mosaics- woven from the finest stained glass. She was whole. She was connected.

Or so she believed.

Connection did not exist without change. No bond is forever left untouched. And in the cosmic soup of the universe, change is inevitable; and nothing remains unbroken forever.

It began with a single fracture. A single imperfection. It was Alterra's hand that set it in motion. There was no malice, not even cruelty; only inevitability. He was change, and change does not ask for permission.

He alone was enough to shatter the foundation that she thought was immutable.

It broke off, one singular piece of turquoise glass; one that represented the sea itself. She reached for it, desperate, as it was swallowed by the currents of reality.

Gone. Claimed by the ocean itself. She watched in grief as the angry waves carried it away.

She blinked. Once. Twice. The air breathed with nothing but silence and shock.

Then she felt it. The overwhelming sense of emptiness and despair from where the glass had once sat.

Heartache.

She cried out to the void.

Alterra stood before her. He did nothing but watch, his face empty and devoid of emotion. A figure forever shifting, a being who had never been the same for more than a moment. He did not hold her piece. He did not offer it back.

She turned away from him, and stepped into the world where she would remain until her missing fracture was found.

Through ruins and cities she wandered.

Every clue, every sign, was a hint to where the glass resided. She sought to mend the undone.

But connections cannot be forced back to place. Threads woven too tightly, snapped. Hands that clung too hard only crushed what they held.

Still, she searched.

The tides led her to a village. The sand stretched across her feet, and the air was heavy with the scent of salt. Here she met those who have lost more than just a single shard.

A warrior who had no war left to fight.

An elderly mother whose child has grown and gone.

A wanderer who had outlived his home.

She pitied them. Until she saw them rise again.

The wanderer who once had lost his home became a builder.

The mother who has been too old to cradle had passed down her wisdom to the growing.

The warrior became a guardian; his blade still protecting even without war.

They had lost but were not broken.

They had changed but did not end.

She stared, acknowledged, yet hesitated before turning away.

She found a family huddled by the shores. A mother, father, and a child. They shaped many castles, all of which were reclaimed by the tides.

She expected sorrow; but there was none.

They did not mourn.

The child simply laughed, his small hands carefully reshaping what had been lost. The parents knelt beside him, offering their help. They didn’t despair like she once did. They only created anew.

Imperfections marked them. The father's hand, missing two fingers, was still able to carry the child. The mother's braid, streaked with silver, was weathered yet still gleamed in the sun. The child bore scars, a forever reminder of an old sickness, yet he runs around the shore, quick as a hare, as if unburdened.

They had lost much, but they did not fear.

She looked down at herself, at the cracks that marred her form. At the hollow space where something once belonged.

She felt herself shifting; not breaking- only changing.

The tides that had claimed her piece carried her far, but in the end, they led her back.

The piece she thought she'd never find again laid on the sand. Its edges were softened by the passage of time. The once bright and shiny turquoise pigment had turned dull.

She reached down, gently holding it against her hand.

The weight felt different than what she remembered. It had changed.

And so had she.

Lifting the new piece, she pressed it against the space it once filled, but it no longer matched.

Instead, she wove something new. The gap shifted, reshaped by all she had seen. All she has come to understand.

The missing piece did not restore her to what she had been. It became part of what she was becoming.

She was not broken.

She was changing.