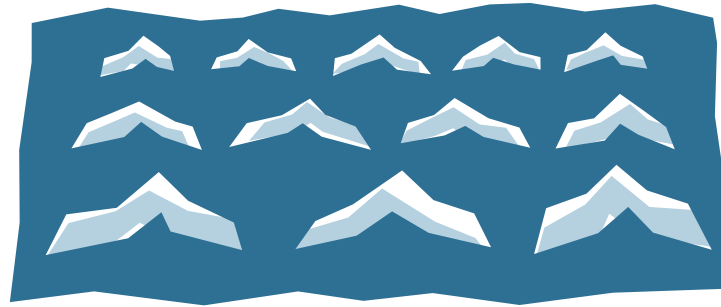




# Sand of the Sea



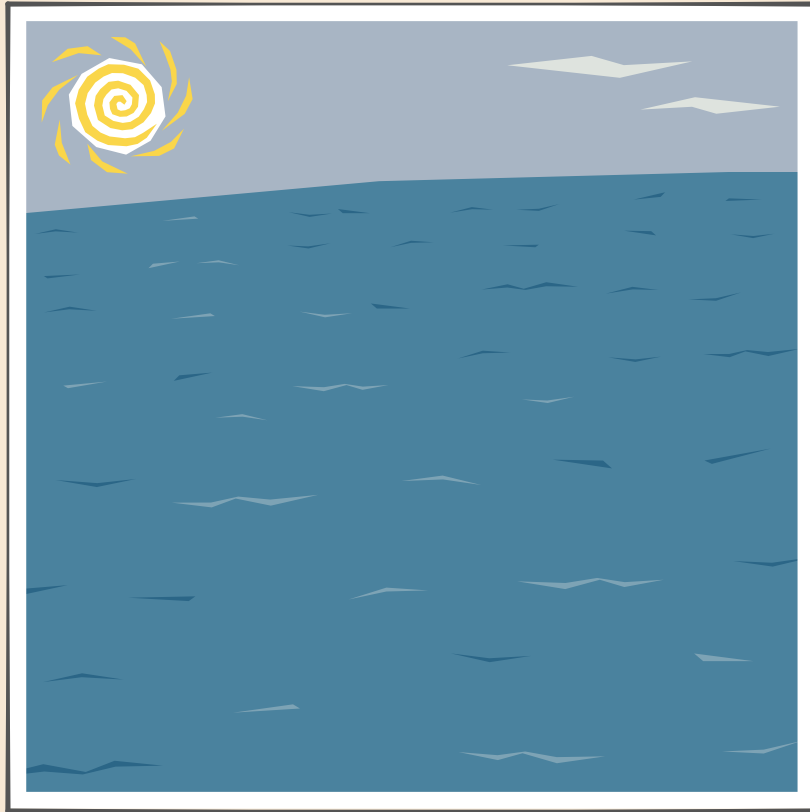
by Steve Dorchester

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One long-ago morning, from deep in the sea,  
A wave rose to daylight carrying three  
Grains of sand; setting them sparkling on shore...



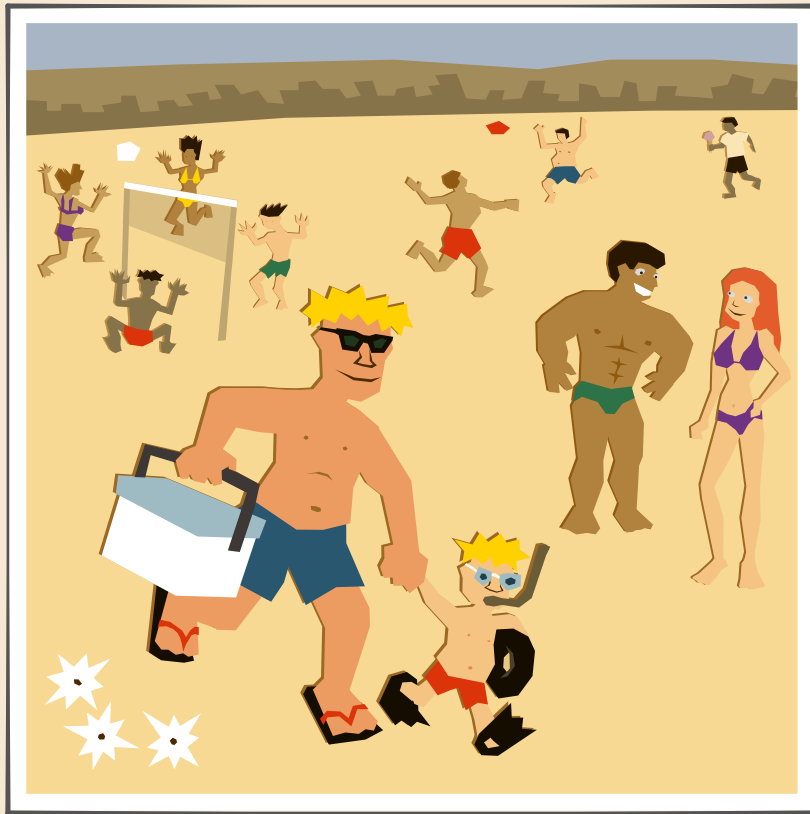
Beached in a crazy new world to explore!



Sunshine dried the fresh grains of sand,  
Breezes provided a tour of the land,  
And wherever they looked, the grains were in awe  
Of all the spectacular things that they saw.



"That trunk with the branches is blooming in red!"  
"Look up above us — it's *blue* overhead!!"  
"Look there! Those arm-flapping creatures can *fly*!"  
"How do they manage to stay up so high?!"



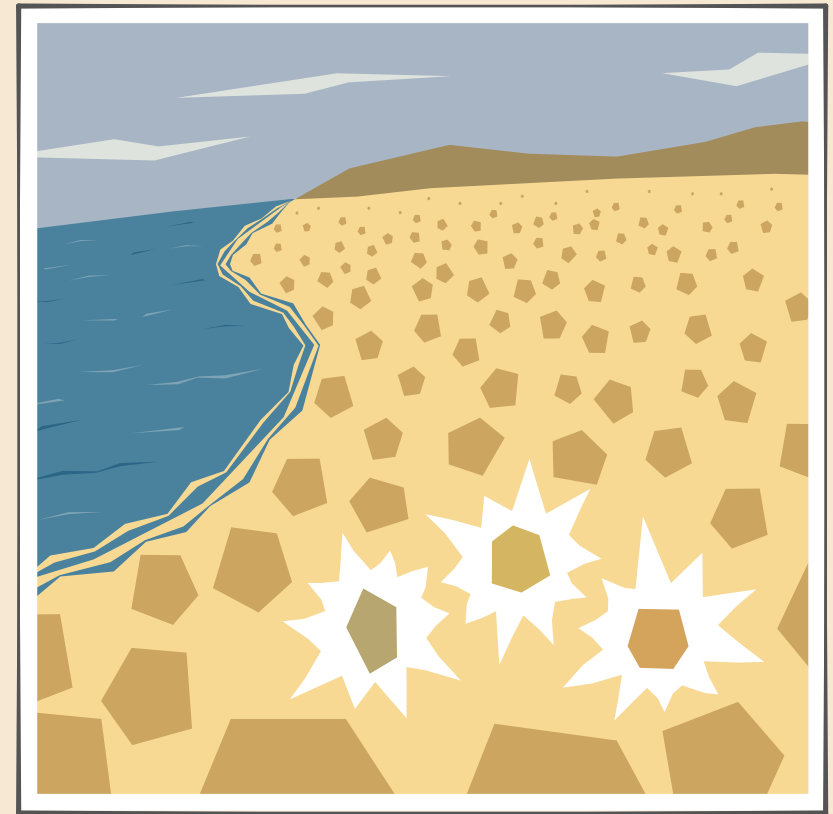
Newness abounded, but oddest of all  
Were furry-topped "people" things (big ones and small)  
Who swarmed out in bunches to be in the sun,  
Lugging the stuff for their lunches and fun.



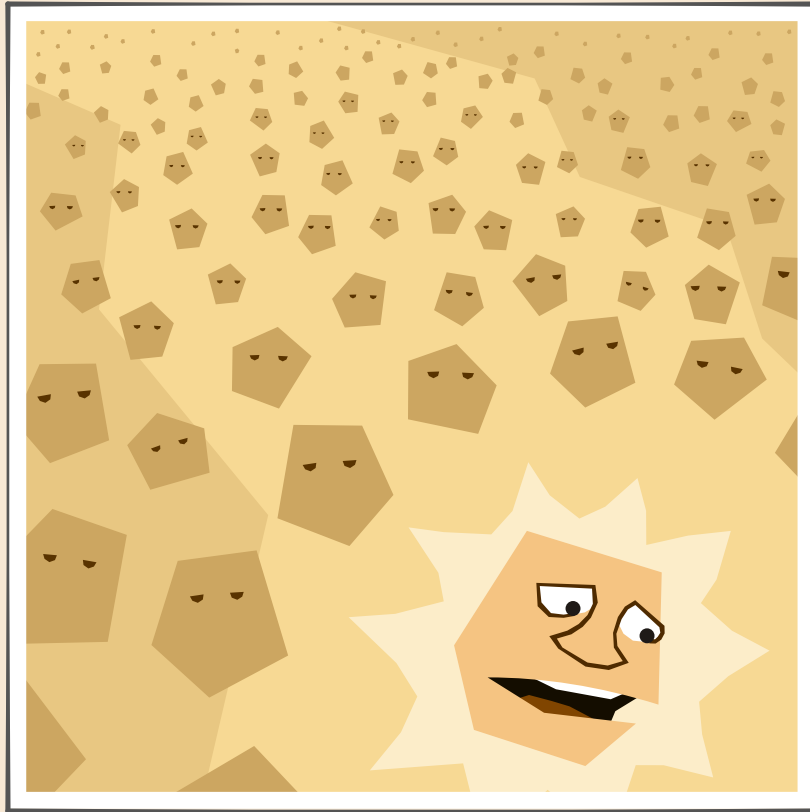
They were blobby beings with wiggly limbs  
And looked pretty funny while taking their swims —  
Yet they looked even stranger when stepping around  
On two bendy leg-poles that stretched to the ground.



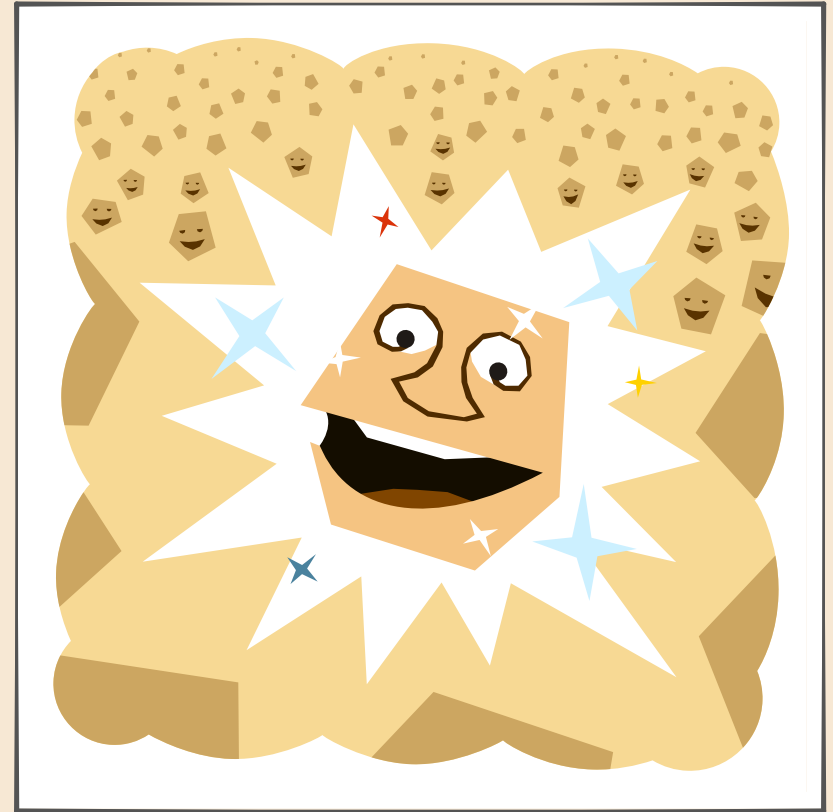
So, the sand was bedazzled day in and day out  
With a world's-worth all over to marvel about.  
The grains pledged forever, together they'd be;  
Friends to the end on their beach by the sea.



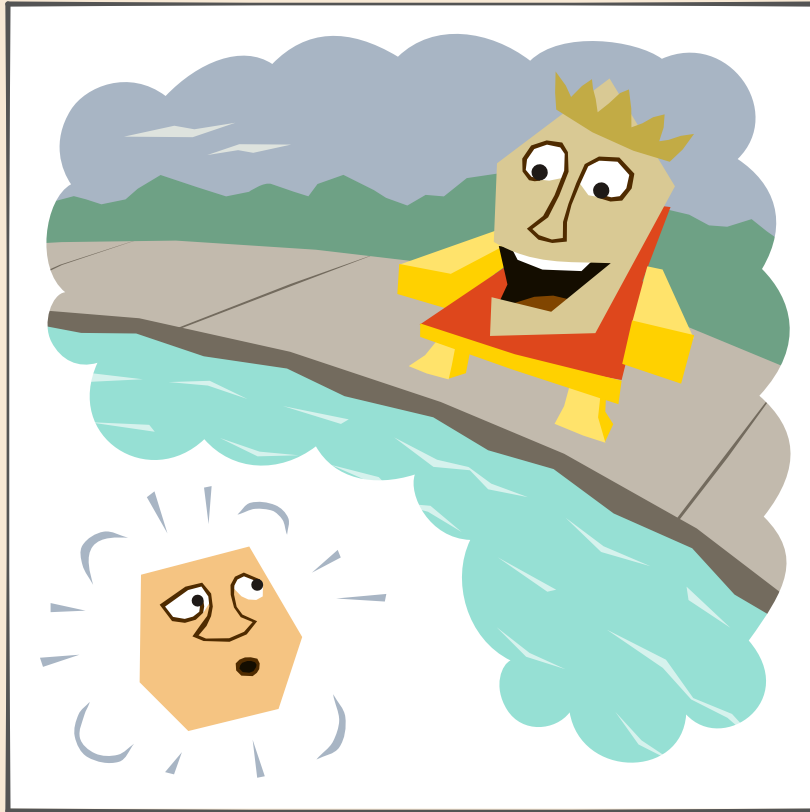
All was divine and the grains were content.  
They met other grains wherever they went.  
As a matter of fact... their beach was *packed*  
With grain after grain. Too many to track!  
The extreme overcrowding had numbing effects  
And the grains came to feel like just meaningless specks.



"With billions of grains on this beach by the sea,"  
One grain lamented, "Who'll notice *me*?!  
Unless I'm magnificent, second to none."



So it polished itself and gleamed in the sun.  
"Now watch me outsparkle the most brilliant jewel.  
I'll be loved by the world! I'll be famous and cool!"



"You're a fool," said grain two. "But here's what *I've* planned:  
There's a pool I have heard of where there is no sand.  
I'm going to find it and there I'll be King;  
The 'Almighty-Ruler-of-Each-Little-Thing!'"



"Bah! You two blow off to wherever where,  
But first," said the third grain, "Look way up there...  
I'll hop on a bird and I'm going to fly  
To the top of that cliff where I'll live in the sky."

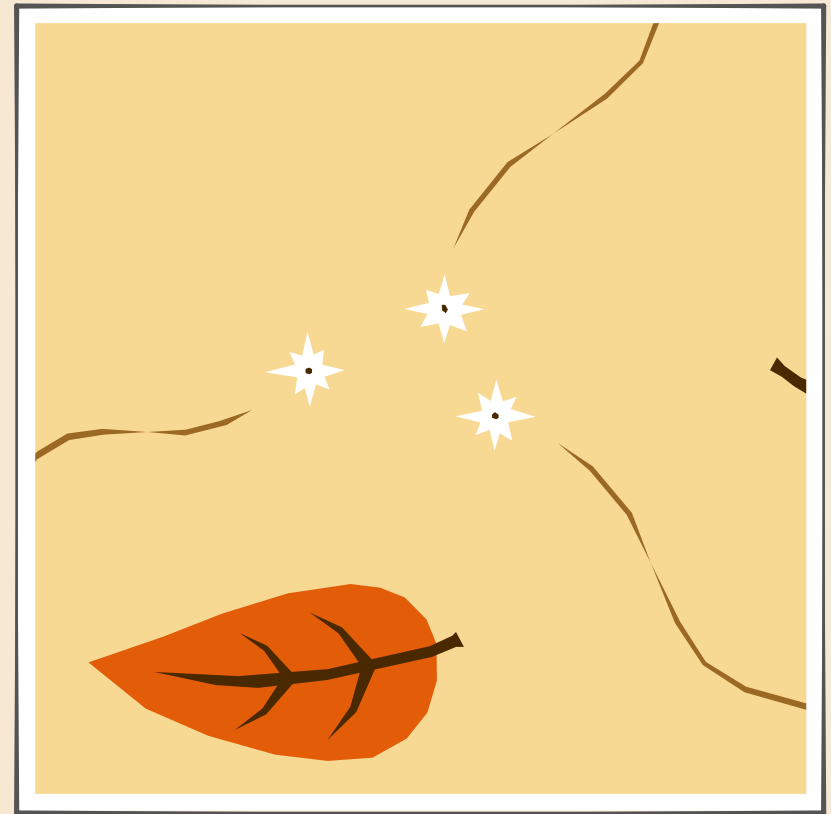




And...so...

With the very next breeze, each went their own way.

Year followed year...

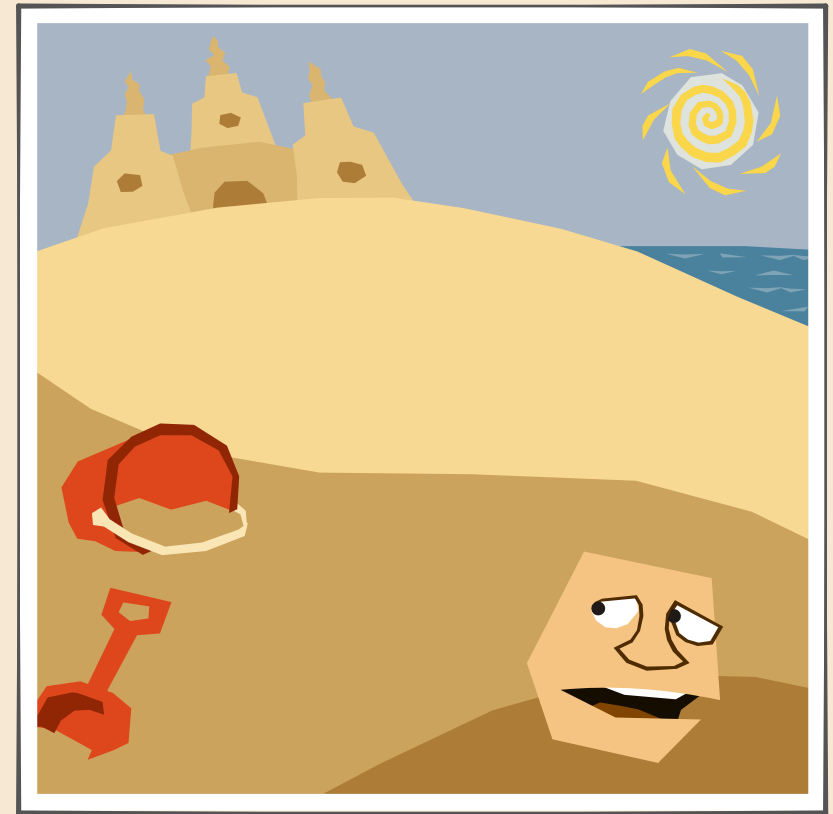


...'Til one Autumn day,

Their paths re-connected. A happy surprise!  
They chatted for hours and told of their lives:



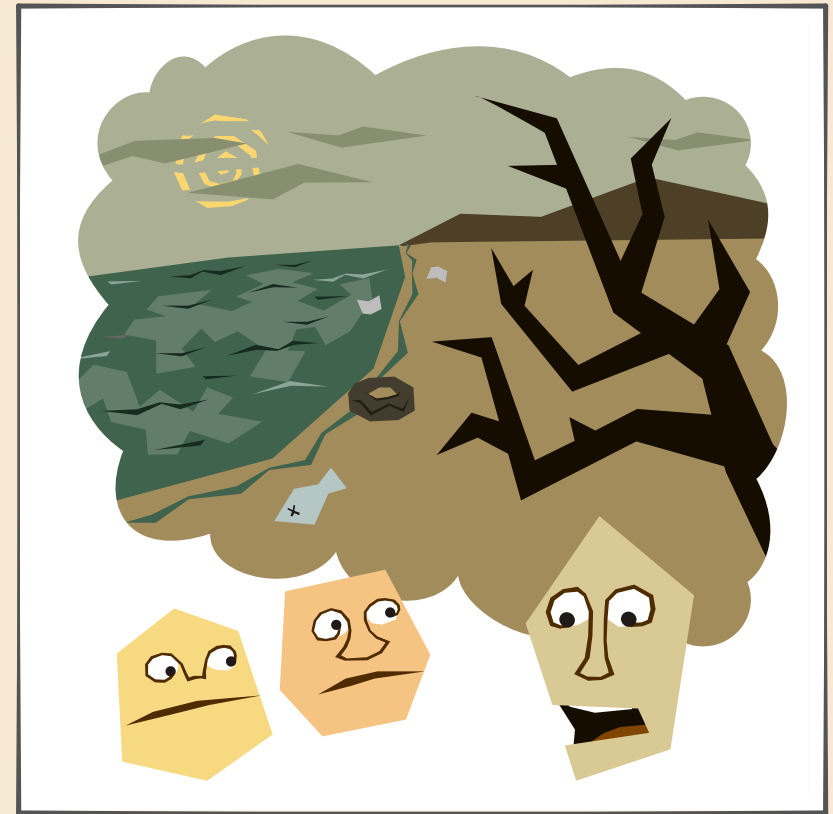
"I drifted to Hollywood and within just a year  
I'd started my long-running acting career.  
Remember that film scene in '*Space Monster Three*'  
When the hero threw sand at the beast? That was me!



I glittered and dazzled and I was a Star  
With fortune and fame and a castle afar.  
But life in the limelight isn't always so hot.  
One day you're on top and the next day you're not."



"Well I campaigned," said grain two, "to the Capitol, where I worked to preserve our land, sea, and air. But it's hard to compete with consumption today — 'BUY MORE! USE MORE! THROW MORE AWAY! THAT KEEPS OUR ECONOMY HEALTHY, YOU SEE!' Say stuff-selling spokesfolk for Big Industry.



Yet unless we get wiser, I think we'll pay  
With a junk-filled-up planet that's barren and grey."



"Bravo for you! You've done better than me.  
I've traveled this wide world," said grain number three.  
"Been every which way, from bottom to top —  
All countries, all places, with hardly a stop!"



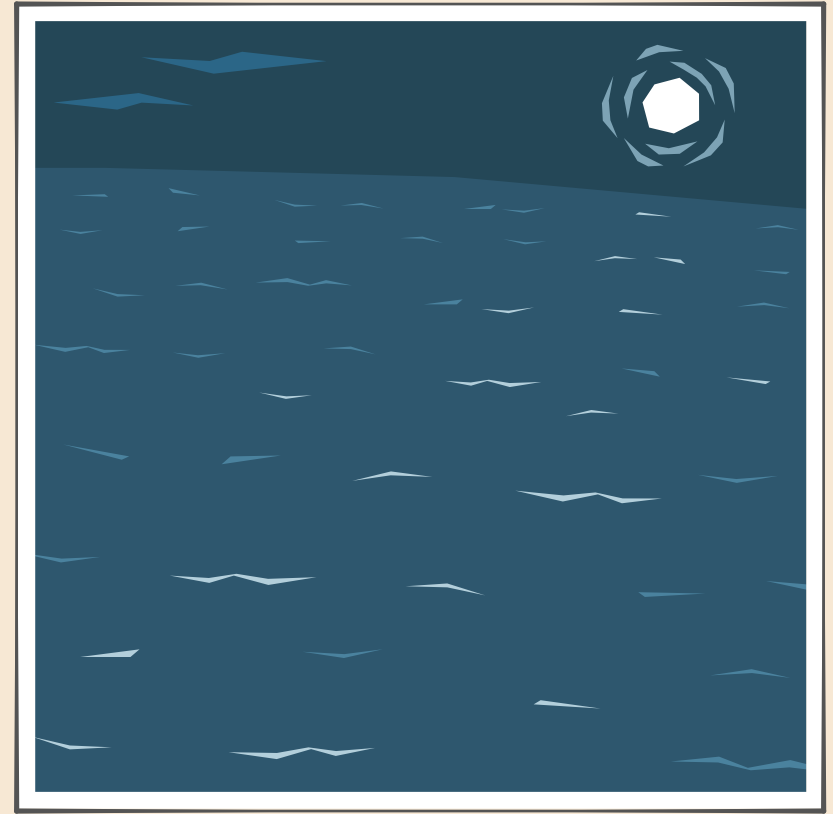
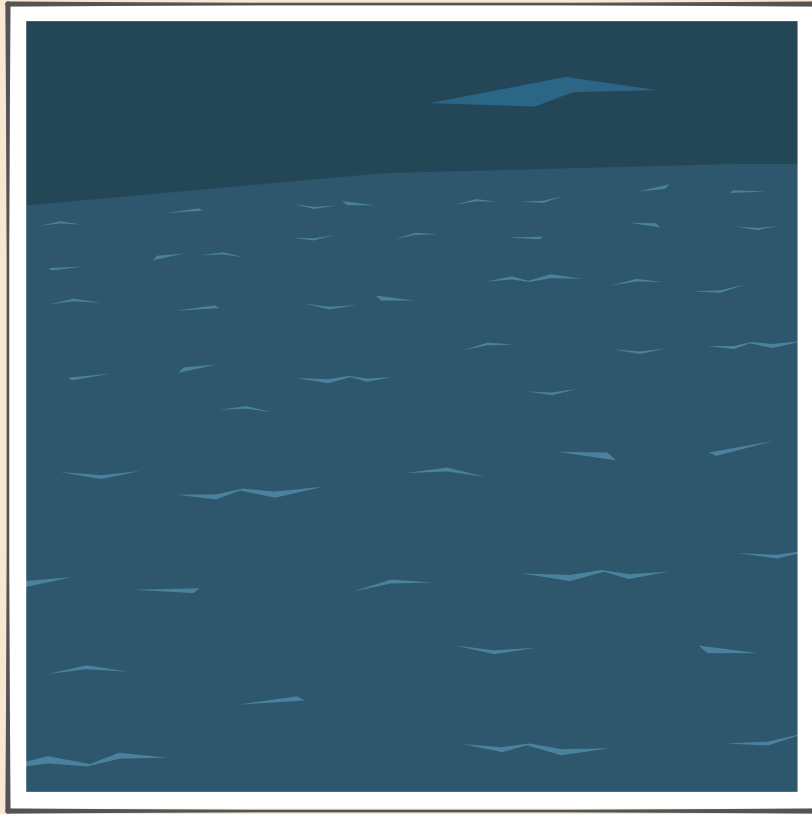
Yet sometimes I look back and feel empty because  
I never made time to enjoy where I was.  
So here I am now, and I've seen a lot —  
Sitting with you is the very best spot."



The tales were quite different that each had to tell.  
Each had successes and failures as well.  
Still, one thing on which they all did agree:  
They'd missed their old friends and their beach by the sea.



Gradually orange and violet seeped through the sky  
As the sun slipped away for its nightly goodbye.  
The three friends contentedly drifted to sleep,



While the evening tide brought them back to the deep.



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