



GAIA

by Mohamed Aseen Nasrulla, Maldives

There are different versions of how I came to being. To tell you the truth, even I don't know how I was created. Nobody had pens or papers then, so I can't really vouch for what happened. By far the most interesting story was probably by the ancient Greeks, so let's stick to that. According to them, the matter in chaos collected together and solidified into earth. I developed a personality, Gaia, the earth mother. At first there were no humans, just animals and other beings. I was young then, the whole world was covered with greenery. The air was cleaner and the sky was bluer. The land itself was young, the shackles that bind me now were not there then.



Soon, humans came into being. I nurtured them, helped them reach where they are now. At first they were grateful. They even worshipped me, which is more than I ask from them. As years passed humans advanced, I became just another endless layer of soil and rocks. Yet I had hopes that one day they will remember me again. My health deteriorated when the humans started harming me. They dug too deep in their greed for riches. They cut the trees covering my body -the one thing kept me from falling. They kept the soil together and the weather constant. But when the industrial revolution began, I almost died.

The pain I endured isn't something that I can describe on paper. I was damaged physically and mentally. The humans whom I looked after, turned against me. Countless trees were cut, mountains were destroyed and rivers were dried up, just for the convenience of humans. Large buildings became shackles that bound me. All these acts took a large toll on me. New deserts were created, places where the soil was completely fertile became dry and deserted. When I was first created deserts weren't something that existed. But with all the change to the world deserts came into being. At first I didn't care much, but when the deserts started increasing in size I became alert. No matter what I tried I couldn't fight against the desertification.

After centuries of suffering, some people took notice of me. At first it was just a few, maybe a dozen or two. The number slowly started increasing, more people started taking notice of me. My health gradually improved with the effort of people. I am still scarred after the event that took place in the last millennia. I do not trust humans like I did once, broken trust isn't something that can easily be repaired. It is because of the few humans that do care that I am still alive, the only reason I didn't swallow the people living is because of the few humane people living on earth. I still haven't completely lost my faith in mankind. I believe that one day the humans will realize their mistakes and rectify them. I just hope that it isn't too late by then.