



The Friend of a Friend
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Mere leaned on her dad and wished things were different.

They were moving to the mountains across the road.

“The sea is slowly eating our land,” sighed Dad.

But Mere knew that the sea was not to blame. The sea had told her so.



Mere would miss her friends a lot.

Baam the electric eel who enjoyed giving her a shock.

John the crab king who always beat Mere in a sideways race.

And Ula the parrotfish who always brought Mere the freshest, whitest sand from goodness knows where.

Yes, she would miss these friends. Most of all, she would miss the sea.



When Mere and her family left their home,
she heard her friends' farewell song.

The song Baam had sung when he left his
island.

The song John had sung when the waves took
his wife.

The very song Ula had sung when she missed
her home.

Now Mere heard the same sad song.



As they drove away, her friends voices grew softer and softer.

Until Mere could no longer hear them.

She couldn't hear Baam's laughter, or Ula's love songs.

But saddest of all, she could not hear her beloved friend, the sea.



Up and around the mountain they drove.
Everyone was excited except for Mere.
Only she kept looking back.
Searching for her friends.
Missing her old home.



The truck stopped just outside their new house.



Mere hated it immediately.

She was met by the chirping of a cricket.

She looked out the window, but just to wonder about her friends.

“Where are the sea friends that only I can hear?”

Then Mere realized she had heard a cricket.

Chirp, chirp.

There it was again. How was this possible?

Mere stood still and listened hard.

Chirp, chirp.

Mere realized she really could hear the cricket.

What was more, she could hear other new sounds too.



Mere slowly peeked out the window again.
From the greenest forest, she heard voices.
“Hello, I’m Fangless,” hissed a boa
“Hey there, I’m Iggy,” mumbled an iguana.
“Howdy,” yawned an upside-down bat.



“Welcome Mere,” said the friendly voice of the forest.

“I’m a friend of your good friend the sea.
He asked me to keep an eye out for you.
Oh, and he said for you to visit your old
friends soon.”



Mere's smile returned to her.
She realized that she could have friends here too. Somewhere deep in the forest, new adventures awaited her.

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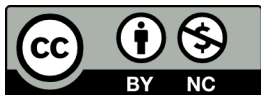
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Original Story

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