



## A Scar and his Friends are Never Parted

By James Stiffel

I remember being born.

I sort of...faded into being. It was nice at first. Feeling the warmth all around me. A faint, rhythmic tremor, rippling over my form. It was peaceful. Calm, for a long time. That was when I didn't know what time was. I remember being...so happy at being...alive. On my own, on that featureless landscape of pink and red. It was beautiful.

I knew back then, that I was here for a reason. A meaning. A life purpose for which 'I' was chosen. But, I came to realize that...I didn't have a purpose. I didn't have meaning. I understand now that my 'existence' was because of damaged skin. I was 'born' because skin had been destroyed. Ripped apart, stretched and then healed back together. Only, the skin doesn't look the same afterwards. Not beautiful, or pink, or smooth or as untouched as the day it was 'actually' born.

I only know this...because of the screams. It starts with the shouting, then the earthquake...then the scream. I was atop a creature in pain. Here, in my little spot, I was powerless. I wanted to stretch out as far as I could and use my hardened form as a shield to protect it from another earthquake. Or even to somehow caress the skin in an embrace to comfort it in some way. There were days I would actually call out in an endless wail to "Stop, stop" because the creature seemed to lack a voice of its own. Then the others came.

After the skin stops quaking, after the crying has been cried, a purple line appears. like a cracked and jagged pathway, announcing the approach of a horrible, unwelcomed sight. The scar gradually appears. Then another, and another...and

yet another, until the “stop, stop” becomes a deafening surge of voices all bent on one cry and one driven will to end the suffering and the hurt.

But no end comes.

The crying keeps crying.

The shouting keeps shouting.

Until years later, the landscape is torn and withered.

Bumpy and uneven.

Some fade.

Most dont.

But I will stay.

I will stay to remind the creature...“you got through it.”