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missing pieces

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missing pieces

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the way i feel
when i think of how things could have been
is nothing compared to the way i feel
when i remember how they were.
sometimes
the past feels sweeter than the future
and the present feels harsher than i'd hope.
but illusions are plentiful
when i'm free to bask in the missing pieces;
the absence of something or someone i didn't know i needed.
both a gift and a punishment
for sharing a part of myself
with someone who didn't really deserve a chance in the first place.
my experiences are uniquely my own,
still i can walk into a room of a hundred souls
and find someone who understands exactly how i felt
on that warm night last summer.
and we call it growth:
the sudden realization that my worth is not a shifting concept;
rather it is a constant and steady flow.
regardless of the lapses in self love and in faith
and in clinging desperately to an unattainable ideal of perfection.
so we breathe slowly and deeply,
try to savor the taste and feel
of fresh air flowing into our lungs.
for the choices we make,
though they might be blessings or mistakes,
those choices shape our very being
we cannot experience love
without first walking with loss.
and that is the true gift of being human.