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CHILDHOOD, MEMORY, AND THE COLD WAR

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Traveling Stones¹

Oshie Nishimura-Sahi

It was a summer Sunday. Taken by her grandpa, she went to Mt. Inunaki to spend a summer day by the river. She was observing the stones along the river, letting her little feet swim in the cold, soothing water. Every stone was tiny and round, and so smooth to the touch. She also liked the nice and cold weight when she took one in her hand. She decided to take a white, smooth, and charming stone with her for the memory of the day. Showing her favorite white stone to her grandpa, she told him that she wished to bring it home. But he answered her with an apologetic smile:

Unfortunately, we can't take her home. Do you know why she was smoothed like this? Since she was born in a mountain somewhere, she has been rolling in rivers and probably even seas while rubbing her sharp edges. And now she found a nice place to have a rest. So please don't disturb her enjoying her journey. Let her just be here where she belongs at this moment.

'Boring', she thought, but finally she returned the charming stone to the riverside. Where will she go now?

1 This is a childhood memory produced as part of the Reconnect/Recollect project discussed in the introduction to this book.