

The Traveler of Time: the Path to Future

I was walking on that path, and it was flanked with cherry blossoms in luxuriant bloom. Bearing too much weight, the branches bent down slightly as if seeking the warmth of the soil. Walking on earth, we were ignorant of the warmth of it, but the plants were not.

The tree knew when to enter dormancy, when to wake up, when to flower with all its might, and when to bear an abundance of fruits. Of the cycle of life the tree's understanding was perhaps deeper than ours.

The tree and time had entered a covenant, which neither of them violated, quietly faithful. Thus, in blossom the tree was not carried away by pride, and in the bleakness of the falling of leaves it stood proudly, hardly demoralized. Be it prosperity or decay, they were the will of time.

This was the second time that I walked on the path. The first time happened between autumn and winter, and the friend who led me here said, "If you don't regard it as taboo, I would like to show you a beautiful place." To appreciate beauty, I had no taboos in mind, and therefore we had come to the Garden of Spirit in the valley.

The Garden of Spirit was the ultimate destination for every one of us, the same future at the end of different paths. But we were too afraid to imagine it, and even the act of approaching was considered ominous.

In my first encounter with the Garden of Spirit, the lofty trees were surrounded by an air of desolation, and many large, magnificent monuments pointed to the sky. Artistically they indexed the lives of the deceased, some fully written, some only a few lines of haiku. I was shaken by the magnitude and poetry of the Garden. Death could be so solemn, so surpassingly beautiful.

If we were willing to imagine more about the words that were to be engraved on our tombstones in the future, maybe we would have suddenly found insignificant the things for which we had desperately fought; maybe we would have suddenly waved away with a smile the grudges and grievances that we had nursed for years. I often felt that our worries and restlessness were both caused by a lack of imagination of the future.

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