



For homework, choose an object to put in your matchbox diary. This object should remind you of a special event or journey. Write a story about this memory.



A Smooth Stone
By Alicia Hsu

When my father was a boy, he lived at the summit of a small island in the Fujian Province of southern China. Every day, my father and his nine brothers and sisters would race down the narrow, winding paths of Gulangyu to their village school. My father, the oldest brother, would choose a smooth stone from the path and kick it down the hill. The children would chase and kick the same stone back and forth to each other until they reached the schoolyard. The youngest brother would pick up the stone and put it in his pocket until school was over. Then, they would run again, kicking the same stone uphill until they arrived home.

When I visited Gulangyu with my own children many years later, I told them this story about their grandfather, great uncles and great aunties as we walked up the hill to the big house. We imagined them all together as children, laughing and running, and kicking a smooth stone to school.

Alicia Hsu, 2019

