El viaje del calígrafo
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El viaje del calígrafo (The Calligrapher’s Journey)

In a time when there were no paths crossing valleys and mountains, when every village was an island and every community thought itself unique, in this time the calligrapher was only a calligrapher and he lived in a hut in the middle of a garden. Every morning he woke with the sun, cleared his head with a cold wash, and had breakfast alone in the early-morning silence. Then he would head to the garden and breathe its scents. Sitting at his table, he would lick his brush and begin to write. He knew certain things. He knew which flowers and fruit trees blossomed when and in which direction. He knew about mushrooms in the autumn, and what he could store for winter.

The children of the village said that his words were alive. The calligrapher would be entertained by this, and gift the children sentences drawn on paper. He would carry on observing nature.

The calligrapher suspected there was something beyond the valley and that over the mountains there would be more valleys and other mountains. He suspected that the river that flowed past his house would water other lands. And in these lands there would be other children who would bathe in its waters. He dreamt of seeing new trees, cross unexplored rivers, talk with unknown children, take the stories of some to others. And he was sure that the same moon would accompany him wherever he went. He had been thinking about this for some time, so, one morning, instead of sitting at his desk, he set off into the thick woods.

He began to forge new paths, and in a week he reached the village on the other side of the woods, and in a month he reached the confluence of the stream he knew and a larger river. After three months of walking, he saw the sea for the first time. People say he walked for many years, so many so as to lose count…

… there is clearly the idea of language enabling our journeys, and behind that the power of language to create. Nature, and more precisely observing nature, is also a key theme, as are emotions. This, combined with the constant shift between the micro and macro levels (such as writing becoming paths and vice versa) make this a thought-provoking work.

From the reader's report by .