

My name is Minako,



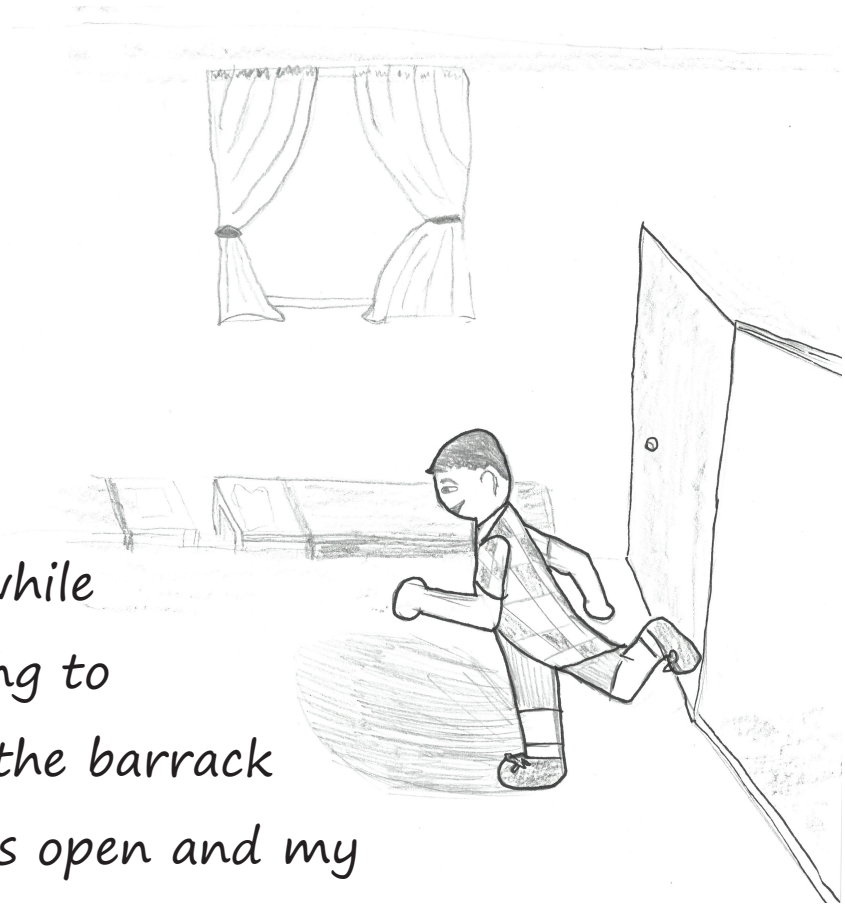
I'm 13 years old and like to make jewelry.

My 15-year old Nichan (brother), Norio, likes to find interesting things. I like to see what he brings home because he often gives his treasures to me; beautiful pieces of glass or other decorative things to make jewelry.

He did this even after we went to Amache.



One day, while I was talking to my mom, the barrack door swings open and my brother rushes in excitedly.



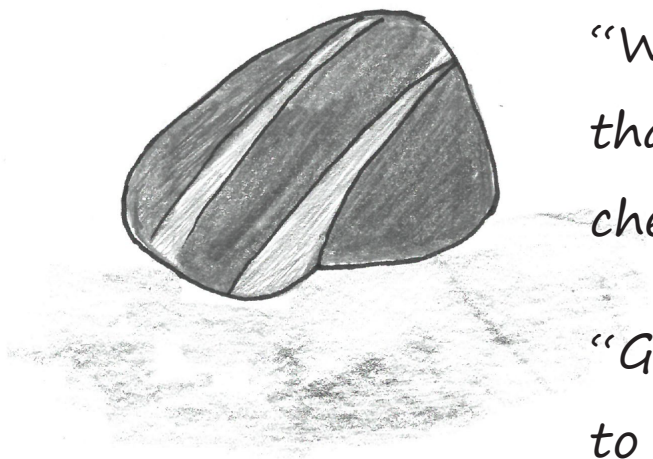
“SIS! YOU’LL NEVER BELIEVE WHAT I GOT!” he shouted.

“Geez, don’t go too crazy. What did you get this time?” I asked enthusiastically.

“I don’t exactly know what it is but it’s SUPER pretty. I thought you could make something out of it. Here . . .”

Norio handed me a beautiful black rock with gray streaks and dent marks. It was STUNNING!

“Nichan, it’s BEAUTIFUL! But can we break off a smaller piece?” I asked.



“What if Dad could do that and make it into a cherry blossom charm?”

“Great idea. Let’s talk to Dad.” I said.

When Dad returned, Norio told him, "My new friend, Yori, you know, the one from Tule Lake, gave me this really cool rock for Minako. Do you think you could break a small piece off and make it into a cherry blossom?"

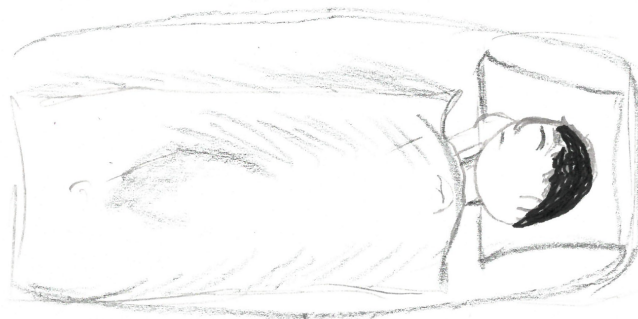
"I'd have to see the rock first." As Norio pulled it out, Dad said, "Well, that certainly is a beautiful one, isn't it?"

"Do you know what kind of rock it is?"
Norio asked.

"I believe it's an obsidian rock but I'll have to take it to Teruko, my gemologist friend, to see what he can do."

"Thanks, Dad," we said together.

After supper, Dad took the rock to Teruko. That night I almost couldn't sleep; not because of the crying child next door, but because I was so excited.

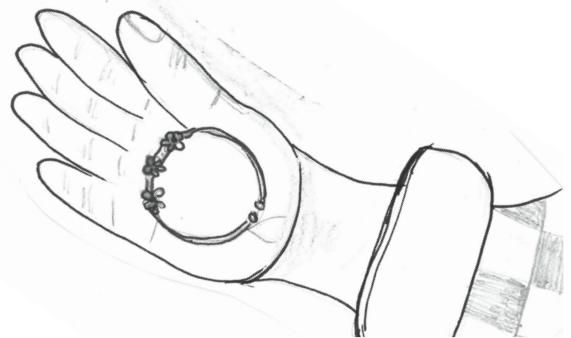


One morning, after breakfast in the mess hall, Dad and Nichan were waiting with suspicious looks on their faces as we stepped back into our barrack.

“Nichan, what’s going on?” I asked.

“Just close your eyes, Dad and I have a surprise for you.”

I closed my eyes and when I opened them Dad was holding not only the cherry blossom charm, but a beautiful matching bracelet.



It had 3 beautiful tiny blossoms. I jumped in excitement. The bracelet was lovely and looked great on my wrist. I spent the rest of the day experimenting with different necklace designs.



I finally tried just hanging it on a silver chain which made its beauty really stand out.



As I pulled my hair up and put on the necklace, "Amazing!" I whispered.

"Mom, Dad, Nichan, I'm finished! Isn't this necklace exquisite? And, a bracelet to match!"

“It’s beautiful, Minako!” Mom said.

“It’s unbelievable!” Norio said.

“It’s perfect.” Dad said.

“Dad, where’s Teruko’s barrack? I need to thank him!” I ran to his barrack and showed him the necklace. He loved it!

I spent the rest of the day showing it to everyone I saw.

After some time passed, we decided to put the rest of the obsidian in our garden, adding to its beauty as my necklace did to me.

When we were finally able to leave camp, I wore the necklace and bracelet, but forgot the obsidian.

So there it remains, abandoned in our garden.

