

Burned Like Fallen Leaves

By Misao Nagoya

I was 15 years old on August 6, 1945. As a mobilized student, I was spending those days putting matches into boxes at the factory, polishing cans at the packing plant or sort-youth. It was only till the eight grade that we had a regular schedule at school. Toward the man and woman, was mobilized to work for end of the war. We were forced to offer our own sewing machines to sew military uniforms. No e said a word, laughed or cried. We had to go on working silently.

Meanwhile, from our school windows we could see American air force planes-B. 29s flying over us. Then we were mobilized to make bullets at the Japan Steel Manufactures flying thousands of Japanese girls made bullets incessantly in four shifts of seven hours each.

Why didn't we cry? Why didn't we complain? I don't remember seeing the emerald green of the May sky. Instead, weary in body and mind, we all seemed to roll along like so many burned logs, in our effort to win the war. However it appeared that it was not enough for us to just manufacture bullets.

The military began to train us, girls in military ways and in the use of guns, just like soldiers. On the night before August 6, 1945 when we were to be assigned to the Second General Military Headquarters. I felt as if I had no spirit and energy, though I might have had a bit of pride in being chozen to work there.

On the morning of August 6, the sky was blue. The rest of my family had already left home when Grandfather and I heard the buzzing of an American plane-a B.29. The weird sound came closer and then the reddish yellow powder exploded over us with a terrible deaf. ening roar. At last a bomb was dropped among us. I thought I was hit.

Though I was standing outside, I found myself blown into my house and lying on my stomach with a pillar and a part of the ceiling on my back. Blood covered the Tatami mats. I couldn't tell where I was wounded. Unconsciously I called Grandfather. My feet were numb In no time my neighbor's roof began to burn furiously. Somehow, I managed to escape the fire and took refuge in the mountain. Everybody tried to go to the mountain, thinking that the bomb had dropped on their own house. On the way they were crying and screaming with their skin hanging down and hair standing on end. Individual family members rushed towards

the mountain.

Black smoke blew up and covered the sky of Hiroshima. Soon utterly black oily rain fell. It seemed to me that every thing had happened within a moment, but when I came down the nountain it was three o'clock in the afternoon.

Father, Mother, Older sister and younger sister were all separated from each other. ly house and everything in it was burned to ashes. I felt as if I were burned to ashes when stood on the ruins of a fire, still feeling the heat under my feet.

My younger sister was never to come back. As a 7th grade, she was being mobilized to acuate houses on that day right in the center of the explosion. She had left home on that

morning in good health. Some of her classmates were dead under the thick outer wall the temple and others died in the water tank with their leg or hand gone. But where is my sister? Even now I wonder if she was among the 200.000 victims who were burned to ashes like fallen leaves and gone forever without being identified, with no youth and way to live and with neither reward nor decoration.

Or she might have been left alone, forgotten, having been late to escape, and become a weed by the wayside. Or she might have had her clothes burned and her body swollen. Unable weed by the wayside, begging for water, she might be buried body, sh into the sea. Of to tell anyone her nam with a lot of maggots all over her burned both she may have been burned to ashes. Anyway she disappered without leaving a trace on this earth.

urned impossible to have anything sweet. We had only 2 day's rationed rice a month What did we eat for the rest of the month? We competed and fought over the rice offered What didly Budhist altar. My little brother said that he ate a bean bit by bit first its pels and then its half and then the other half in an evacuation group. All of us were always star ing, miserable and worn out, without tears to shed.

Why, for what, for whom do nations wage a war? Who on earth started the war? Without thinking of it, without seeing anything, without hearing anything, without saying anything without doubting a bit, we were driven to the war. And Atomic Bomb was dropped. We don't want any more war at all.

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