

# Atomic Bomb

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August 9<sup>th</sup>, 1945, it makes my skin creep when I recall the day. I don't think it's possible to imagine for people who didn't experience it.

I was 45 years old back then. I left home to go shopping at about 8 am on the 9<sup>th</sup>. I left my two children at home and went with my eldest son's wife's mother. As we walked to Yagami, there were many air raids. We couldn't get to our destination easily.

Finally we got to Imorimachi, where the family that my sister had married into lived. While we were greeting each other, there was a horrible sound that sounded like it was coming from the top of a mountain. We were 16 km away from Nagasaki, but it was a very dreadful sound and it sounded like it had been dropped on the house we were in. Everyone panicked and children started to cry; it felt surreal. My sister said "Go home soon! Nagasaki is in trouble!"

I started to walk home at 2 pm and came up to the tunnel in Himi, and there we saw people who were injured; burned heads, bleeding and people who were lying down because they were injured and couldn't move. When I came up to Hotarujaya, small houses were smashed and glass was all over the street. The front of the station was burning. My house was in Shiroyamamachi but we couldn't get there so I went to my brother's house in Sakurababa, but everyone had escaped towards the mountains and no one was home. There was a shelter on the mountain side of Narutaki, so I went there and left for Shiroyama early the next morning.

As I got close to Urakami Station, I could see dead people on the street. When I got to Hamaguchimachi, a horse drawn coach and its occupants had been knocked over. Some people who were pulling a *riakaa* (2 wheeled cart) were asking for help. The most terrible site was of people who had been crushed in a heap under a tram in Matsuyamamachi, and I can't even express it in words. There was no road, and roof tiles had been blown off and I ran across those tiles. They were hot....

Finally I got to my house but all the houses in Shiroyamamachi had been destroyed. Even though all my neighbors were dead, no tears came to my eyes and I don't know why. One of my own children had been thrown to a place you wouldn't even think to look, and was dead. How awful for things to become like this within a few hours. I didn't know where my other child was so I was looking when I saw my husband and we cried together bitterly. A policeman came along and said he didn't even know where to start helping people, so he asked us to burn the bodies ourselves. It was a lot more awful than hell.

It's been 37 years since then and I don't want to think about it. If I start writing it will be endless. I'll put down my pen.