

Testimony of Yoshitaka Kawamoto.

. ...One of my classmates, I think his name is Fujimoto, he muttered something and pointed outside the window, saying, "A B-29 is coming." He pointed outside with his finger. Looking in the direction that he was pointing towards, I got up on my feet, but I was not yet in an upright position when it happened. All I can remember was a pale lightening flash for two or three seconds. Then, I collapsed. I don't know much time passed before I came to. It was awful! The smoke was coming in from somewhere above the debris. Sandy dust was flying around. I was trapped under the debris and I was in terrible pain. I could not move, not even an inch.

I started to feel fear creeping in. I started to feel my way out pushing the debris away little by little, using all my strength. And with my head sticking out of the debris, I realized the scale of the damage. The sky was dark. Something like a tornado or a big fireball was storming throughout the city. I was only injured around my mouth and around my arms. But I lost a good deal of blood from my mouth, otherwise I was fine. I thought I could make my way out. But I was afraid at the thought of escaping alone. I crawled over the debris, trying to find someone still alive. Then, I found one of my classmates lying alive. I held him up in my arms. It was hard to tell, his skull was cracked open, and his flesh was dangling out from his head. He had only one eye left, and it was looking right at me. First, he was mumbling something but I couldn't understand him. He was going to faint. But still I could hear him crying out, saying "Mother, Mother". I thought I could take him along. I guess that his body below the waist was crushed. The lower part of his body was trapped, buried inside of the debris. He told me to go away. And by that time, the smoke was filling in the air, but I could see the white sandy earth beneath. I thought that must be the playground, and then I started to run in that direction. I turned back and I saw my classmates Wada looking at me. I still remember the situation and it still appears in my dreams. It was the last time I ever saw him.

I, so, was running, many hands were trying to grab my ankles. I went to Miyuki Bridge to get some water. At the riverbank, I saw so many people collapsed there. And the small steps to the river were jammed, filled with people pushing their way to the water. The water was just the dead people! I had to push the bodies aside to drink the muddy water. I stood up in the water and so many bodies were floating away along the stream. It was horrible. I felt fear. I couldn't move. I couldn't find my shadow. I looked up. I saw the cloud, the mushroom cloud growing in the sky. It was very bright. It had so much heat inside. It caught the light. It was strange. And then, I lost consciousness. When I came to, I found myself lying on the floor of the warehouse. And an old soldier was looking in my face. He told me that he had gone with one of the few trucks left to collect the dead bodies at Miyuki Bridge. They were loading bodies, treating them like sacks. They picked me up from the riverbank and then, threw me on top of the pile. My body slid off and when they grabbed my by the arm to put me back onto the truck, they felt my pulse, it was still beating, so they reloaded me onto the truck carrying the survivors. I was really lucky. But I couldn't stand for about a year. I was so weak. About two weeks later, my hair started to come off, even the hair in my nose fell out. I became completely bald. I could not see for about three months. Probably not because of the radioactivity, but because I had become so weak. I was only thirteen, young... And still growing... with recurring dreams of a strange unkind world.