



Nobuo Nishimoto Nagasaki August 1945

(Nobuo was 16 at the time Photo taken August 2015)

Shortly after seven in the morning, on August the 9th 1945, when I was preparing to go home from the night shift, I received an order from Mr Kato, who was the supervisor of the factory, asking me to continue to work. If I obeyed his order, I might end up working a straight 36 hours including the night shift. Moreover once next morning came, I might be told to continue working for another daytime shift. Even for the sake of my country, it was hard work, and for a student too, I wasn't even an adult! I refused to work overtime, even though I couldn't believe how I could be saying such a thing to a supervisor. Anyhow I shook off Mr Kato's order and ran back home leaving the Mitsubishi Nagasaki weapons factory, about one kilometre direct distance from Ground Zero. Mitsubishi Nagasaki Factory produced torpedoes. I was on the machine called a shaper and producing multiple parts.

When I came around the backstreet of Nagasaki high school I met my younger brother, it was the day for him to go to school. He was three years younger than myself and we greeted each other with little hesitation. I said 'Watch yourself as you go to school. There's still an alert' I never thought this would be my last moment seeing my brother well.

I had a deep sleep, I was tired from the night shift. I woke up suddenly for some reason and found that I was sitting on the bedding. I wondered whether a bomb had dropped in our neighbourhood. I couldn't figure out what was going on. I looked around inside the house and saw that the 'shoji' sliding screens and glass doors had all gone, and two bookcases had fallen right down on my left. I rushed to look outside. I saw a dust cloud covering the entire city and giving out a loud booming sound. It was right after the atomic bomb exposure. I ran to the bomb shelter in the next neighbourhood with my mother. Two people came in from the Urakami district. 'Urakami is all wiped out, a new type of bombs hit the ground', people were agitated and we couldn't understand what it was all about, however I realised that Urakami district was in deep trouble. As time passed injured people passed by us and we saw that their injuries became more severe, people bleeding from their entire body or someone with an enormous blister on the chest, people who were walking down the mountain with severe pain. We offered for them to take rest, but they only gave us a glance and kept walking

down. They must have really wanted to get home. My father, older sister and older brother were in another area, they were safe and came back late in the afternoon, but my younger brother didn't return. I wanted to go look for him but Urakami district was on fire and I was unable to go. It rumbled and I saw flame and fire, burning all over and even the sky was red. I sometimes heard the sound of explosions here and there. We spent a short summer night, but a long night, holding feelings of worry, concern and fear. My younger brother still didn't return home. I finally went down the mountain to start searching for him. We were walking right in the middle of hell. Urakami district was full of burned debris all over. I saw many charred dead bodies in that burnt debris. I saw a terrible body, a mother who was holding her baby in her arm. How cruel a scene that was. Someone tried to talk to me, breathing feebly, with a little voice, saying 'A student, let me drink some water.' I wondered if my brother might be lying down in the school like this person. I searched for the fate of my brother in that hell wilderness, looking into charred faces or squeezing my way along debris. I saw thousands of people wandering around and looking for dead bodies and ashes. I gave a glance to the enormous dead bodies floating on the Urakami River, and I finally arrived at the Nagasaki Shogyu school. The school was located only one kilometre from the Ground Zero. The school building and the factory were burned down. Rice, miso, bean paste and soy sauce ingredients, which had been stored in the burnt building, gave off a bad odour. I entered and encountered a severely injured lady student with a wooden block sticking into her stomach and through her back. As far as I knew she was the only survivor from the daytime workers, but I couldn't do anything. I still can't forget her sad face with a look that wanted to say something, however one saving grace was that my co-worker in the night shift, Mr Yamaguchi, helped her and took her to the First Aid station. ...While I was searching for my brother, I went to see the factory. I saw many burnt machines and I found blocks of bones. I also found the block of bones by the machine which I was in charge of. I wondered who it could be, someone must have operated this machine on my behalf. If I had obeyed Mr Kato's order yesterday morning, this burned bone would definitely have been me. As I stood there I felt multiple bones around me and even the burned machines staring at me with rueful looks, giving me such a peculiar and bizarre feeling, shivering up my spine and making me tremble. I pulled myself together, prayed and rushed out from the factory. I continued looking for my brother. I looked in the classroom and the ground, I looked everywhere but I couldn't find him. I wondered had he run into the mountain and died there? No matter how

hard I tried, I still couldn't find him. I went home. I was extremely exhausted and lost my voice. A civil defence unit then came to tell us my younger brother was waiting for us... they told us that he was at the entrance of the school. I wondered how, as I had tried hard searching there. Anyway, we went to Nagasaki Shogyogo school, in the hell wilderness. My third visit, but there we found him! He was there! My brother was burnt severely across all of his back and looked pitiful. He was lying down on a roof piece by the school entrance there were two rice balls by his face that someone must have given him. He ate half of one. 'It must be painful' 'You suffered so much', my mother comforted him in a faltering voice, yet surprisingly my brother's response was quite calm. I covered him with a shirt that I wore. His injury was beyond burns, his scar burned deep inside his muscle. It must be beyond painful. I was trying to give comforting words while I was covering him with my shirt, but my voice wouldn't come out. Instead my tears came down all the way. Just before the atomic bomb dropped he had been digging a shelter, thousands of degrees of radiant heat smacked into his back and knocked him down. I was speechless. The one who was supposed to obey his master, but said 'No' to him had survived, the other, lost the toss. He went out of the shelter, only for two minutes, and was killed. That moment determined their destinies. The atomic bomb is cruelty and injustice. A young man, whose soul received that fearfully sad destiny, left without a word, no complaint or curse. Two days later he took off to heaven quietly with the family watching over him. It was August 12th 1945 at 2:30p.m.



Urakami district after the bomb with the remains of the cathedral.



Sadako Sasaki 1943-1955



Children's Peace Monument, Hiroshima.