

" I Will Wait for You in Heaven."

Sixteen years have passed since that day in August when the Bomb was dropped, and my daughter, Midori, was killed. Just before she died, as she lay in pain she told me in detail about that day. The following is very much her story as she told it to me.

"That day just a little before noon as I was at my machine, there was a huge flash and the machine fell towards me. I fainted, and on regaining consciousness, after I don't know how long, I could hear voices calling, 'Midori, Midori,' but I was trapped from the waist down. I could hear what sounded like drums being beaten. Then I heard my name being called again. I knew it wasn't a dream, but I kept lapsing into unconsciousness. I didn't want to die. I wanted to go home to my parents; so I prayed fervently to our Blessed Mother that she might intercede for me.

Once more I could hear my name being called 'Midori, Midori,' but the voices seemed so far away. Hoping it wasn't a dream I began to cry for help at the top of my lungs. Two friends who had been working nearby came to try to drag me out. My right leg couldn't be budged. There were flames all round us and so they pulled harder tearing the flesh from my leg. Finally I was pulled clear and they wrapped my shattered leg in their aprons trying to staunch the flow of blood. I tried to run with them but I collapsed. I began to crawl. The flames were getting closer.

Alerted by my friends, two air raid wardens came and carried me to an aid station. I was later moved to a larger place at Isahaya Primary School."

Several days later I heard that Midori was safe at an aid station in Isahaya. I hurried to see her and compared to others she looked quite well, so I took her home. However, her condition began to deteriorate so she entered the hospital. There she just got worse. None of the treatment was of any use against the invisible and unknown power of the Bomb. I quietly cursed it.

Next her hair began to fall out and her gums to bleed. I felt certain that she could not survive and so began to pray that should she die God would take her home to heaven. She herself never complained of her pains—rather in a weak voice she would pray and sing her favorite hymns. I told her once that I would willingly share her pains but she told me that she must carry her own cross.

On August 30, just before she died, knowing her time to be close, she began singing a hymn to our Blessed Mother but her voice broke. "I can't sing any more. I wish I could go back to see Junshin. I wish I could go back and walk round the house. But no, I can't. When I die I will wait for you all in heaven. If I am cremated, send some of the ashes to Junshin and have a Mass offered for me every now and then. And please bury me next to my brother. . . ."

Then, apologizing for having been such a trouble to us all, she passed away. Though that was some sixteen years ago her image and the sound of her voice still lingers in my mind and heart.

Misa Hiramatsu
Mother of Midori