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Title: Junko Mizuta Interview
Narrator: Junko Mizuta
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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<Begin Segment 5>

- AT: 00:23:11 So. So then where was your family assigned to go from Portland?
- JM: 00:23:18 Well, we went to the assembly center first and, well we lived in cubicles. No, no ceiling. And ah, since there were only three of us, we weren't allowed one cubicle to ourselves. So we had to share with another family was a mother and a daughter. I think her father was a FBI pick up too. And uh, we didn't know them. All I remember as I slept in one corner and she slept diagonally from me, but it must have been close quarters, I don't remember.
- AT: 00:24:02 And this was Portland Assembly Center?
- JM: 00:24:06 Hmmh, Portland Assembly Center, where it used to be a livestock exposition ground and, you know, it was pretty bad. The smell and the flies--millions of flies and so they hung up a sticky flypaper we were just packed with flies and I got sick from the fly. I had upset stomach and threw up and everything from the fly and uh, didn't really do too much there, you know, I hung around with a couple of girls and we used to just go out in the lawn and sit and just, you know, teenagers just kinda sit and gab. Except this one time we were out there and um, this cook came out of the kitchen and um, you went to the fence and he put his, move his fingers through the fence and just hung his arm down. You know, like some always say stick from behind. And then the next minute we heard the shot and this cook got shot. By, I think a guard. And he was Japanese because I saw his black hair, he just fell backwards and it hit him in the stomach and blood was oozing out of there and the other two girls and I, we ran as fast as we could and yelling, they're shooting, they're shooting us. And then we didn't know why he got shot and we said, oh, we'll find out when we get inside because people will be talking about it. Not a soul was talking about, it was just hush hush. But I later found out it was because he went near the

fence, you know, he was just hanging there looking out into space. Probably having a lot of thoughts you know. But he, he got shot by this guard, you know, it was terrible.

- AT: 00:26:38 And this was all, you were not far from him?
- JM: 00:26:41 No, we weren't far because we could see, you know, I think I even saw the gun in his hand, as he came down. No one seems to know what happened to this cook. You know, I've been curious ever since. And you know, I've been trying to find out, but no one seems to know.
- AT: 00:27:02 Did you see the guard who shot him?
- JM: 00:27:06 Yeah, well, he came down and he was coming down, but by then we just ran, you know, I don't know what happened after that.
- AT: 00:27:16 Do you think he was um, like in one of the
- JM: 00:27:20 I think he was in the guard house. Yeah, because I think there was a guard house near there.
- AT: 00:27:33 Wow. Do you know about how old the cook was?
- JM: 00:27:37 I don't know. He had his chef hat on, couldn't tell. He was kind of heavy set person. Well, you know, he had all white on, so you could see the blood coming, oozing out from his stomach.
- AT: 00:27:58 And did you think because as you were saying that your friends were yelling, they're shooting us. Did you see that they were going to be.
- JM: 00:28:06 Well we didn't know we were near there, so we just, all three of us just yelled out, you know, they're shooting. And we ran.
- AT: 00:28:19 Hmm. And after there was no,
- JM: 00:28:22 Nothing. It wasn't in the paper. No one talked about it. In fact, about 10 years ago, I was talking to somebody who was also at the assembly center and she said, I never heard about it, so I guess it was a hush hush.
- AT: 00:28:42 Hmm. Do you. Should you try talking about it with your family?
- JM: 00:28:48 Yeah, they

AT: 00:28:48 Did you tell them about what happened?

JM: 00:28:48 Yeah, they know because I talk about it for 75 years, what happened to that cook. I hope he didn't die, you know, his, his crime was going to the fence. I didn't even know that until about 30 years ago and um, this other gal I met out here, she said when she was 5, she went to the fence to get a ball because she was playing with her ball. And um, a guard came up to her and told her and balled her out for coming to the fence. And she said to me, gee, at that time I was only 5 years old. I didn't know any better. So.

AT: 00:29:40 So is that what month in 42 is

JM: 00:29:52 That was in May, end of May, I guess. We, we went there beginning of May.

AT: 00:30:04 And I know you said you don't really remember how you got there. Was it close to your hometown?

JM: 00:30:12 I don't know. I don't. I think it was, I think was on the Northeast corner maybe. And we were on the East side. I don't know.

AT: 00:30:25 And how long has your family that

JM: 00:30:28 In the assembly center? I don't know. I think we must have moved down in September or August or something.

AT: 00:30:40 And there, there wasn't school there?

JM: 00:30:42 No, not that, this was like summer vacation, you know. So...no, we just kind of, you know, enjoyed ourselves. I was a waitress who waited on tables and they had dancing there. I used to go dancing on weekends, you know, ballroom dancing. But other than that I don't really remember anything else we did there.

AT: 00:31:15 Can you tell me more about being a waitress? Was it like mess hall style or

JM: 00:31:19 Yeah, we had the long bench like tables and we just served people, I just, you know, I don't really remember too much.

AT: 00:31:34 Did you get paid for that?

JM: 00:31:37 I don't know. Maybe we did, but I don't know, I don't re, maybe \$7 a month. We got paid.

AT: 00:31:51 And do you remember your first impressions when you first arrived to the assembly center?

JM: 00:31:57 No, no, I don't remember anything. I just remember having to live with another family.

AT: 00:32:11 And getting sick. Was there ah, was there a hospital or treatment?

JM: 00:32:16 I have no idea. I don't remember. There was a post office, but I don't remember anything else.

AT: 00:32:28 It seems like your, your most vivid memory was the but the shooting,

JM: 00:32:34 Yeah, the shooting and the flies and getting sick and living with another family

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