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Title: Junji Sarashina Interview
Narrator: Junji Sarashina
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 12>

NW: So, going back a little bit in time, tell me about August 6. So you had your family members, all of them in in the city of Hiroshima, except for your father?

JS: No, no, no. Things were getting pretty bad at the tail end of the war. So my mom, maybe about 1943, she moved back to the countryside church. And then, my oldest sister, went to, with mom, and then, about 1943, my other sister right above me, she moved to the country side, too. And my . . . the sister right above me, Tetsuko, is her name, Jane is her name. Jane worked at the, um, *hihuku-shō*, clothing making for the military in the countryside, close to my mom's church. Yeah. So she started to work there. My oldest sister began to work there, too, *hihuku-shō*, in uh, very close to my church.

NW: Right, in the countryside. And what's your older sister's name?

JS: Mariko.

NW: Did she also have American name like Jane?

JS: No. Mari, is, how everybody called her Mari, but we called her Mariko.

NW: How about Junji-san, yourself?

JS: No, I don't have one. I was too poor to give me an English name. [laugh]

NW: [laugh] I don't know!

JS: No, I didn't, I didn't have. And . . . skipping the story so much. I told you about my . . . So we were safe, you know, they were safe. I was then in Hiroshima, and I stayed in the dormitory, high school dormitory for Hiroshima Icchū, and that morning, this is . . . went here to . . . high school students had to work in the morning, and I worked at an ammunition factory in Hiroshima.

NW: I see. It's a student mobilization.

JS: Yeah, that's what happened. But one thing I forgot to tell you is, a little bit earlier, we didn't have communication with my parent, my father, because he was, my other brother was in the, I told you earlier, his name is Bob Kanji Sarashina, that's the one that Mie-kokutai, Navy officer. He was in Mie, so he was okay, he survived. But my other brother who was 4 years older than I am, Tommy Takuji is his name, Tommy Takuji. When he was in the high school, the Army

drafted him. He was a little bit older than the rest of the kids because of language, yeah? But he was drafted and this trained him about one month in Japan, they sent him to China. From China, the whole, well, the group, battalion, I don't know, regiment, they moved into Manchuria. When they got to Manchuria, the war ended. And the Russians came in. So the whole battalion became a prison of war.

NW: Oh . . . so your brother was also. Yeah.

JS: And they send them to Siberia. He was telling me that they put him on a train, and they send him to . . . what you call, to Russia, they don't know. Then, he remember seeing the lake, Baltic Lake? Day after day, day after day, he would see the Ocean, so he thought that he was seeing the Japan Sea.

NW: Ohh Oh my god.

JS: Then he went to the camp, and he stayed, he was in the camp for 2 years. As a prison of war, laborer. Cheap labor. He suffered, he had a little bit of beans, and a little bit to eat. A lot of people died. Things were so bad that people used to, according to him, they washed dishes and pots and pans. So people waiting until foodstuff to come in, and they used to pick those things and eat. They were starving. They thought that they was pretty bad, but native Siberians, or Siberians who were sent over there, they had hardly anything to eat either, also.

NW: Were they prisoners? As I understand it?

JS: Could be. They go to reasons, you know. They might be sent there, they were just as bad as those Japanese prisoners. Handful of beans, sometimes they ate just a handful of dried *daizu* beans. At that time my father did not know after the A-bomb, what happened to the family, what happened to these two brothers, and his guess, my father's guess was that because they were drafted, they were in service. So one was in Siberia, but my father did not know anything about it, so "I've got to go back to Japan." So, those are some of the missing connection we had. And some of the stories of the family, in August, you know.

NW: Well, I guess, one of the most difficult things is that you don't really know whether or not your family members are safe, and where they are and if they're still alive even.

JS: Because my father probably felt that he was responsible for him, because he was the one who sent all the kids to Japan. That was his decision. We didn't go to Japan, you know, we would rather in Hawai'i, with all friends, we were just kids. Can't make any decision. The main thing was to go to send my oldest brother to Japan to learn English, to take over the church.

NW: Right, right.

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