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Title: Junji Sarashina Interview  
Narrator: Junji Sarashina  
Interviewer: Naoko Wake  
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**<Begin Segment 13>**

NW: So you were the only member in your family who was in Hiroshima?

JS: Yeah, yeah.

NW: And you said earlier that you were only one mile away from hypocenter?

JS: Yes, I was one mile or 2.5 km away from the hypocenter, as a factory worker, steel factory worker. And, so you want to know about the explosion things like that?

NW: Yeah, tell me anything that you remember, yeah.

JS: Oh, okay. So we were working in the factory early in morning. What we did was that we worked in the factory in the morning, they fed lunch, and afternoon we had to study, in the factory, a big hall. But during the war, you know, surviving is the only thing, hardly any food to eat. Specially in the dormitory. Rations so scarce and at the factory, I was making anti-aircraft bomb, it's about this big, about 2 feet long, and about 8 inches in diameter. 16 year old young kids were making something like that. Not a skilled machine maker, but you learn, and 16 years old kid was making. I was making, they called a reversed gear, you know the thread, you know, cut the head, make a thread like this, and shape the bomb. [laugh]. I don't know if it was good or bad, but young kids were working. That morning, I got there, and then, I walked out of the building, fairly tall factory building, the bomb exploded. And this building did not collapse, but you know, it came down this way, and all the glasses, everything like that were flying around.

NW: Were you inside the building at that time?

JS: No, I was outside. I came out here and was next to a tall building, the reason this building did not collapse is there's steel structure inside the building, for pulley, heavy equipment to hang or pull it up, because of the internal structure, the building did not go [f-shew], it was . . . but glasses flew. When that bomb exploded, of course you do not know, such a tremendous force, you know, you floated or you hit down on the ground. Somehow, you just, boom! on the ground. I didn't hear a thing. [laugh]. I did not hear noise, I didn't even hear the bomb. And I know that there was such a tremendous light, flash, and I can feel all kinds of things on my head, my arms, and everything. And the first thing I said, is it the direct bomb, where did the bomb explode? You can't see dust and everything is just like having your eyes closed. And so many things on my head and everything, so I first thought, did I get hurt, did I die? Amazing, I didn't even have a scratch.

NW: Huh.

JS: I couldn't even open my eyes, I couldn't hear a thing, I couldn't see a thing. But I know that I was covered by all kinds of junks. Somehow I got up, then walked through this next building, where there was a first-aid station. I was the first one to get there. The whole place is built with almost like glass and windows, windows. I walked in there and a nurse was standing there, and she was covered with blood. And she opened the mouth, and I saw a piece of glass, about an inch square, stuck in there in her tongue. So uhh, she was yelling at me, and I went over there, pull the piece of glass from her, and she collapsed and she started to rest over there. I was scared, too, you know, I didn't know what I was doing, and she was scared, too. Even though, she is a nurse. And I thought, maybe I could [get] the first-aid equipment. And it's locked. So I found a block of wood, broke the case, and pulled like iodine and bandage, you know, not much you can do. Even with the first-aid kit in the first-aid station. So I gave that to the nurse, and picked up a handful of things, and went back to where my work station was. And I didn't know that it was A-bomb, nobody knew it was atomic bomb. But that's all I happened to know, because of that confined area. And we went to some of the people said I got to go home, I got to go home to my mom and dad, so the teacher said, okay, you guys can go home. In my case, a dormitory student, so we were going to go together, leave the factory, cross the river, and cross the town, and go to a dormitory, which was about 5-6 miles away. So we left the factory, and walked along the river, so I saw a lot of people in the river, yeah. And then tried cross the bridge, but I could not cross the bridge. We could not cross the bridge.

NW: Hm, why?

JS: Because Hiroshima was burning. Everybody there, burned from the fire or burned from the A-bomb. They all wanted to cross the bridge and get out of the center of the town. So there was no way for us to go fight the traffic. And not only that, some of the people who tried to cross the bridge, they thought that the safest place was the middle of the bridge.

NW: Oh, so they just stopped the traffic.

JS: There was no way we could move. Not only that, some people might have died right on the spot, too. That's when I saw about 500, 600 people floating either alive or dead. You can't tell. But anyway, it just wasn't going on the stream because it was low tide. So seven of us decided hey, we can't go into the town, let's stay at the factory. So we went back to the factory. At least you can sleep. They had blankets etc., they didn't burn, didn't burn. So we had blankets, and they cooked up some *musubi* . . .

NW: Was it from a rescue?

JS: No, from the factory cafeteria.

NW: Oh, from the factory cafeteria, okay. So it was more or less functioning, even though there was damage?

JS: It was damaged, totally damaged, I don't know if we actually cooked the rice. But at least some of the people realize that they can't go into the town. So they cooked the rice whatever it was they gave us something to eat.

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