Microphones & Brushes

An Exercise in Radical Empathy

By Sach Takayasu

This is a thesis submitted by Sach Takayasu
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Prologue

In 2019, I joined Columbia University's Oral History Master of Arts program to learn how to collect the stories of my mother's experiences over her 90 years, living in both the United States and Japan. Little did I know then how the program would help me bring out her memories and present them to the public. This thesis compiles select interview excerpts, our visual collaboration using art, and a couple of short stories, all based on the remembrances she shared with me.

It tells a story of what it was like to grow up as a child, then become a teenager under increasingly inhumane conditions imposed on civilians as Japan pursued its imperialistic ambitions in the first half of the 20th century.

As her interviewer, I had limits on how much I could really understand the stories that she was sharing with me. After all, I grew up in post-war democratic Japan and New York. My knowledge of wartime Japan is informed by books, photos and films, none of them representing my mom's personal experience.

To more accurately imagine what she saw and how she felt, I built on our dialogues by representing her stories in paintings. These images triggered responses from mom that led to additional dialogues and research. Each revision incorporated stories that did not surface in the initial interviews.

I also transformed some excerpts into short stories using tools different from painting to explore her recollections. This process required that I articulate the sociopolitical context, develop a narrative arc, and see the situation from the perspectives of the characters.

Interviewing, co-creating paintings, and writing short stories enabled me to empathize at a level much deeper than I had anticipated. At the same time, mom told me that our engagement helped her understand me better and why I would sometimes struggle to grasp her experiences.

Thus, this thesis represents an exploration in radical empathy, using microphones and brushes.

It is my hope that fellow oral historians would find this methodology useful in their practices.

I also hope that our exploration will bring to life mom's wartime experiences as well as the characters of the people who were so dear to us both, in a real, tangible way.

For non-Japanese, her stories provide a rare glimpse into the life of a Japanese girl living in Japan under a militaristic regime which culminated in World War II (WWII). Oral histories of those who were in Japan during that time often cover the stories of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, whereas mom lived in Tokyo and Kyoto. I am aware of only one publication written in English that covers WWII oral histories with narrators who lived in Tokyo, "*Japan at War—An Oral History"* by Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook[1].

[1] Cook and Cook, *Japan at War*.

Most WWII oral histories available in English typically focus on Japanese immigrants living in the United States and their American born children, who endured hardship at concentration camps.

A month after I started writing this thesis, Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022. As I developed the content over the following months, I was struck by the images I saw in the news that echoed mom's recollections from World War II, such as the indiscriminate air raids on major cities like Mariupol, civilians hunkering down inside bomb shelters, severe shortage of food and water, and residents practicing bucket relay to extinguish fires. What I thought would be a time capsule of her memories from the past continues to resonate in the present.

Project Design

Project design
Initially, I attempted to capture my then 90-year-old mother's entire life history. I crafted a framework with specific topics to explore, such as how the role of housewives in the 1970s were vital in Japan's rapid economic rise. However, as she shared her recollections from her childhood to recent years living in the Midwest, it became evident that her stories from the war years were particularly illuminating. As a result, I narrowed the focus to just the first sixteen years of her life which culminated in the immediate aftermath of World War II (WWII). It was like discovering interesting produce at the farmer's market and then figuring out how to transform them into a meal, rather than procuring ingredients from a recipe to prepare a particular dish.

Engagement approach: how and why it changed with the pandemic
COVID upended my original plan to interview mom in person during the summer of 2020. However, the vaccines did not become available until 2021, and interviewing face-to-face required both of us to be vaccinated. So in the interim, we attempted to conduct a remote interview session using a telephone hooked up to a Broadcast Host. Unfortunately, the sound quality was suboptimal. It was also difficult to gauge her reactions or needs for water without seeing her. Since she refuses to use technology, neither Facetime nor Zoom were options.

Once we were both vaccinated in July 2021, I was able to see her and conduct the interviews in person at her home. We were also able to sit next to each other to co-create the sketches.

Language and Culture
Although mom speaks English, she preferred the interviews be conducted in Japanese, her native tongue. Since we speak in Japanese with each other, this made sense.

While the Trint Transcription software program offered auto-transcription in Japanese, it presented two challenges. Because mom and my voices are similar, sometimes it failed to distinguish the two. A more problematic issue was specific to the nature of the Japanese language in which the way one speaks is determined by gender, age, relation to the other person, and class. Trint is programmed to decipher a standard, relatively gender-neutral, middle-class Japanese, not the way mom speaks. As a result, almost every line and many words had to be corrected, making the audit-editing process unwieldy.

Once transcribed, I translated the transcripts into English. Literal translation sometimes resulted in phrasing that was not natural. As a result, I sometimes had to grasp the intent and find appropriate English expressions which often differed significantly from a literal, word-for-word translation.

Finally, given that the thesis will be created for the non-Japanese audience, the stories are packaged to resonate with primarily an American audience. An example of this adaptation is the short story of my grandparents' relationship, *The Marriage of Zentaro and Kikué*. It opens with, "I've never seen my grandparents hug or kiss each other…" In my earlier version, this line appeared at the end of the story. However, almost everybody in the Multimedia Storytelling class recommended that I bring this upfront because they could really relate to that. In this way, workshopping with my diverse OHMA cohorts from around the world significantly enhanced the way the stories connect with a broad audience.

Notes on This Document

Types of content
This document covers three distinct sets of information:

- Narratives: primarily transcript excerpts with some context
- Visual dialogues: process and output of the painting engagements
- Short Stories: two short stories based on mom's stories

A page divider introduces the transitions from one type of information to another.

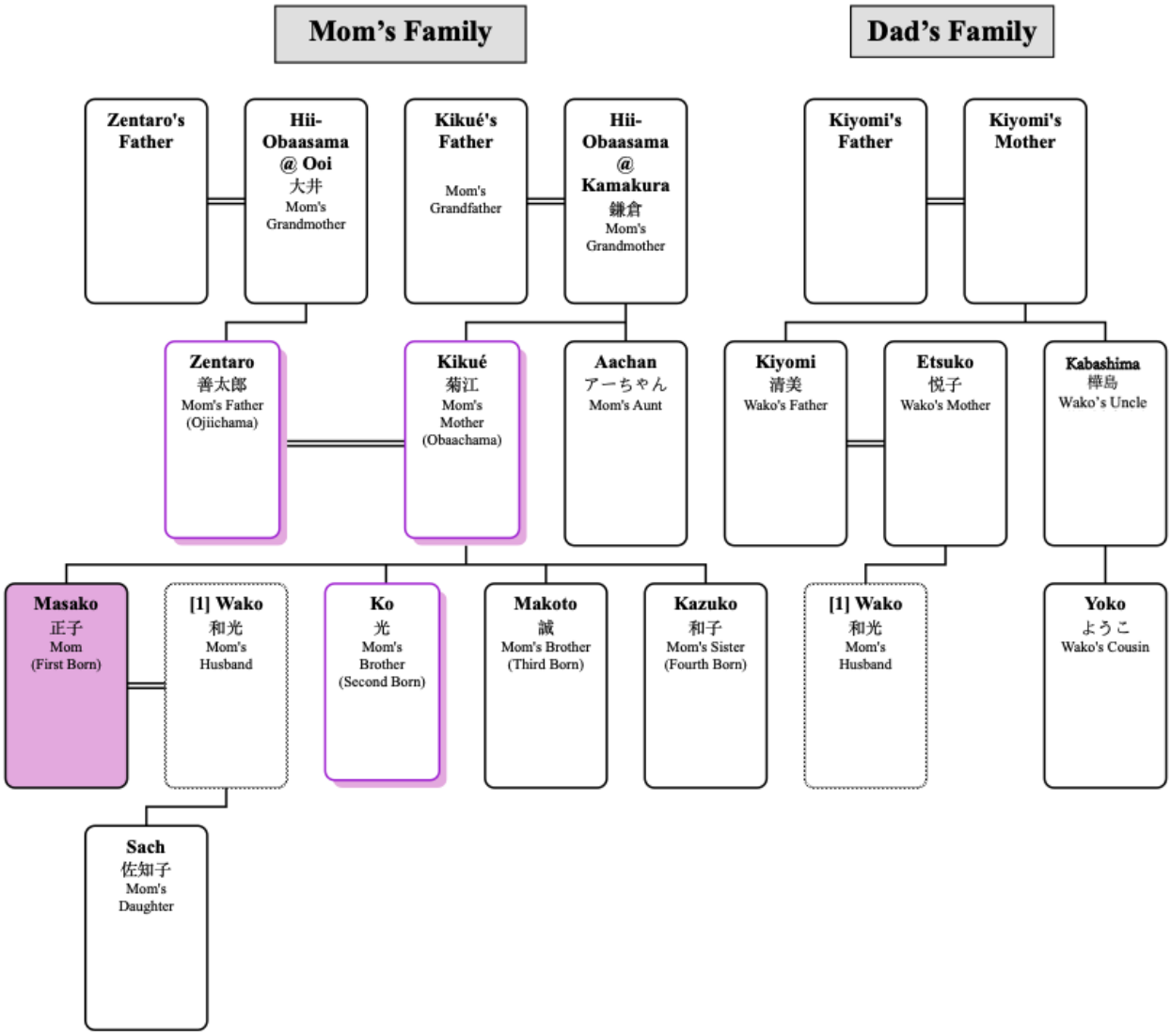
A note on the use of the term, "grandpa"
In general, "grandpa" refers to my grandfather, Zentaro. Although he is the father of the narrator, my mom, she referred to him as "grandpa おじいちゃま" in our interviews, because that is my relationship with him.

I recall her addressing him "father お父様" only when they were actually talking with each other or if she were referring to him in a conversation with her siblings.

Foundation

Family Tree

Family Trees



Left to Right: Kikué, Ko, Masako, Zentaro[2]

[2] Taken in front of the balcony of the official residence for the Executive Secretary of Prime Minister Makoto Saito, when grandpa served in that role circa 1932–1934. Mom is about 3 years old.

Narrative

A Sense of Relief　開放感

I asked my narrator, Masako, my mom, about August 15, 1945, the day World War II ended:

佐知子：　陛下の玉音を聞いたのって何時頃だったの?
Sach: Around what time did you hear the Emperor declare the end of the war?

正子：　お昼 近くよ。
Masako: Close to noon.

佐知子：　で、それで夜寝る前に普通だったら全部閉めちゃうところを開けてたって感じだったわけ。
Sach: So that evening, you opened the windows that had been shuttered until then?

正子：　そうそう。うん、うん。
Masako: Yes, that's right

佐知子：　で、開けて風をっていうかんじだったの。
Sach: So it was like you opened the windows and let the breeze come in?

正子：　うん, うん。それはいい気持ちだったわよ。真っ暗だったけどね。
Masako: Yes, yes. It felt so good, even if it was pitch black outside.

佐知子：　星もなかったの?
Sach: Not a star in the sky?

正子：　星なんか見る余裕なかったわよ。とにかく風に当たるっていうのがいい気持ちだった。フレッシュ・エアーでね。
Masako: I didn't even think to look up at the stars. It just felt so good to feel the breeze. The fresh air...

Of all the sentiments, why did mom most vividly recall this sense of feeling the breeze?

On that particular day, mom was in Kyoto. Reflecting on the weather, she said:

正子：　京都の夏は暑いからねえ。
Masako: Kyoto summers are quite hot.

August 1945 was no exception. The highest temperature of that month was 99.68°F and the average daily high was 93.38°F[3]. Coupled with the monthly average humidity of 74%, it was oppressively hot and humid.

[3] Japan Meteorological Agency "気象庁｜過去の気象データ検索."

With no electric fans, let alone an air conditioner, opening the windows would have provided some relief. However, windows not only had to be shut through the night but sealed tightly to prevent any light from seeping through.

正子：　みんな窓をとにかく閉めて。だから風も入んないじゃない。暑いし。だけどね、命がけだからしょうがないじゃない。ねえ。だいたい寒いしさ、冬は。でも京都の夏は暑いからねえ。

Masako: Everybody closed the windows. So, there was no way for the breeze to get inside. It was hot. But what could we do—*shouganai*[4]. It was life or death. In the winter, it's cold. But summers in Kyoto are hot.

佐知子：　つらかったね。

Sach: That's rough.

正子：　うん、うん。 だから窓を開けっ放しで寝られるなんていうのはもう最高よ。

Masako: Uh-huh. That's why being able to sleep with the windows open was just great!

佐知子：　何年間の間はもう夜は電気もろくに使わないような状況だったわけ？

Sach: For years, you weren't able to even turn on the lights in the house?

正子：　そうよ。だって漏れちゃいけないっていうんだけど、真っ暗の中じゃ何にもできないからね。

Masako: Well, we couldn't let any light leak through. But you can't do anything in complete darkness either.

正子：　黒いね、黒い布なんてのはあんまりなかったから、紙だかなんだか知らないけど窓を全部黒いので覆ってね、外に電気が漏れないようにして。なんかそれこそ繕いものとかいろいろやってたんじゃ ない。勉強とか。

Masako: We used black–well, black fabric was scarce, so we took black paper or something to cover the entire window any time we had to use the lights while we mended our clothes or did homework.

佐知子：　カーテンじゃないんだよね。

Sach: No curtains, right?

正子：　カーテンなんてないもん。で、黒いカーテンなんてないもん。

Masako: There were no curtains. Certainly not black curtains.

佐知子：　でも紙だってそんなにないでしょう。

Sach: But paper was scarce too, right?

[4] *Shouganai* is a variation of *shikataganai*, a fatalistic sentiment akin to "what could we do about it—nothing." Japanese Americans used this phrase to describe their chagrin of being forcibly incarcerated during WWII.

正子：　新聞。新聞に墨塗ったりすれば黒くなるでしょう。だからいろいろそういう時って知恵が出てくるんじゃないの。

Masako: Newspapers. When you paint them with ink, they turn black. These kinds of situations bring out a lot of ideas.

This is how civilians protected themselves from being detected by the American planes.

For the first couple of years after Pearl Harbor, war activities took place away from mainland Japan, where Masako and her family lived. The mainland includes major cities like Tokyo, Kyoto, and Osaka.

Map of Japan. Source: Top Asia Tour[5]

Until early 1945, US air attacks mainly targeted military installations.

正子：　おじいちゃまは京都だったから。それでさ、とにかく危ないからって言うんでね。で、知事の奥さんだから行っていなきゃいけないわけ。 戦争中でも行ったり来たりしてね。で、おめちゃだけね、京都に連れてったの。小さいからね。で、京都はさ、何と言っても知事官舎でさ、書生もいれば女中もいるからさ、預けてこられるわけよ。それで一人で。で、ママと光ちゃんが東京にいたからね。それでおばあちゃまが家に帰ってくる途中でやられたわけ。

[5] “Where Is Japan? Japan Map, Cities & Location, Attractions.”

Masako: Grandpa was in Kyoto. It was dangerous, but as the wife of the governor, [grandma] had to be there. So even though we're in the middle of a war, she went back and forth [between Kyoto and Tokyo]. She has only taken [my younger sister] Kazuko to Kyoto since she was little. In Kyoto, they lived in the governor's official residence, so they had help who could look after [Kazuko]. Ko [younger brother] and I stayed in Tokyo, which is why she was traveling by herself. And on her way back [to Tokyo] was when she was shot.

正子：　トンネル から出たところでね。初めてのね、本土に空襲があった時なんで。昼間なんで。それまで空襲なんかなかったからね。で、ほら、何て言うの、航空母艦と言ってさ、滑走機の付いてる軍艦っていうのがあるでしょう。それから飛び立った飛行機が空襲で本土に入ってきたわけ。

Masako: Her train was coming out of the tunnel. It was the first time that there was an air raid on the mainland. In the middle of the day. There were no air raids until then[6]. You know that war ship, the naval ship that has a runway, well, the plane took off from that to attack the mainland.

正子：　それが汽車が出てきたでしょ。それであの一番先がさ、何て言うの、運転する車種でしょ。それをね、狙ったわけよ。で、おばあちゃまは横浜で東横線に乗り換えるからね、東横線のねえ、階段がね、前の方だったの。だから一番前の次に乗っかってればさ、駅で降りたときにすぐに階段に上がれると思って一番前に乗ったのよ。だから後ろの方の車両は全然狙われなかったのよ。おばあちゃまの乗った所だけ、半分ぐらい死んだみたいよ。もう血の海だったって言ってたもん、廊下。

Masako: The train rolled in. And the first car, with the conductor, that's what got targeted. Since grandma was going to transfer to the Toyoko line at Yokohama [station] and the stairs to the Toyoko line was towards the front end [of that station's platform], she got in the first car, so she'd be able to get to the stairs as soon as she arrived. The cars towards the rear of the train were not hit at all. Half of the passengers in her [first] car was killed. She said the aisle was a sea of blood.

佐知子：　で、そこからどうしたの。

Sach: Then what happened?

正子：　で、そこへね、急遽バスか何かが来てね。それで大井川のところだったんだって。それで何かその大井川沿いのどこかにテントを急遽張ってね、そこを臨時の、なんていうの、クリニックみたいにしてね。でもおばあちゃまなんかわね、軽傷だったんだって。弾が出ちゃってるから。だからちょちょっと手当てしてもらってね。で、もう「帰ってよろしいって」。それでだって重症の人はもうとにかく手を切るとか足を切るとかすごかったらしいよ。

[6] The first air raid on mainland Japan, AKA Doolittle Raid, took place on April 18, 1942. It didn't expand in scope significantly until November 24, 1944. From this point onward, the air raids intensified until the end of WWII. Hiratsuka, *Nihon Kūshū No Zenbō*.

Masako: Pretty quickly, a bus or something arrived at the scene. It was at Ooigawa [Ooi River]. So a tent was set up somewhere along the Ooi River, and that served as—well, sort of—a clinic. But, grandma's was considered a minor injury because the bullet went through and exited her body. So they applied a quick patch and instructed her to go home. But it was mayhem, as they were amputating arms and legs of the seriously injured.

佐知子：　でもそこから帰ってよろしいとか言われても。
Sach: What did she do after being told to go home?

正子：　だからバスがまた出たわけ。
Masako: Another bus came.

佐知子：　うん。そこからどれぐらい。
Sach: And then?

正子：　どれぐらいだか知らない。そんな遠くなかったんでしょ、もちろんね。それで、ま、汽車が待ってたんじゃないの。それでちゃんと東横線に乗って、乗り換えて帰ってきたのよ。
Masako: I don't know how far but of course it must've not been too far away. I guess there must've been a train waiting. So she got on the Toyoko line, made the transfer, and came home.

佐知子：　それで、何、ママはどうやってわかったの。
Sach: How did you know [what happened]?

正子：　わかんなかったの、帰ってくるまで。 だって電話も、電話連絡なんかもないしさ、もちろん。
Masako: I didn't know until she came home. Of course, there are no phones or calls.

佐知子：　その時はどうしたの。
Sach: So what did you do [as a 15 year old]?

正子：　でも遅いから何かあったんじゃないかな、と思ったけどね。うん。もしかしたら汽車が転覆したとかいろいろあるじゃない。うん。だから待ってて。ちっとも帰ってこないからさ、もし何かあって死んでたり何かしたりすれば後妻が来るかしら、なんてくだらないことを考えたりしてたのよ（笑）。
Masako: Well, she was late, so I suspected that maybe something had happened. You know there were trains getting knocked over and what not. So I was waiting and she just wouldn't return. So foolish thoughts ran through my mind like perhaps something happened and if she died, maybe grandpa will bring home a new wife (laughs).

Grandma finally arrived home in the late afternoon. She was wearing a very dark color, so:

正子：　だから血なんか見えなかったけどね。血だらけだったんじゃないの。
Masako: I didn't see any blood. But I suppose she must've been covered in blood.

正子：　でもさ、そこから病院に救急車を呼ぶなんてことはできないわけ。救急車なんか走ってないからさ。自分で病院に行かなきゃならないわけ。で、別にさ、車が家にあるわけでもないしね。で、一休みしたら、それじゃ金井さんの病院に行こうかしらっていうんで。それがいいって言うんでさ。金井さんっておじいちゃまの親友でさ、自分の家で開業してらしたからね。入院もできるしっていうんで。
Masako: But we couldn't call the ambulance to get to the hospital. There were no ambulances around. So you had to go on your own. And it's not like we had a car at the house. So she rested briefly and said perhaps she should go to Kanai-san's hospital, which we agreed was a good idea. Kanai-san was grandpa's best friend who ran his medical practice out of his home in Ueno. There, she could also be hospitalized.

正子：　それで代官山の駅に一緒に行ってさ、ママもついて行こうと思ってさ。そしたらね、切符は１枚しか売れないっていうんで、おばあちゃまが１人で行ったのよ。それで何か座るなんてもんじゃなくてね、もうラッシュアワーだからさ。それで「押さないでください。あたしはケガしてるんだから」とか例の調子でやったらしいけどね。それでもそれで渋谷で乗り換えでしょ。それでまたね、地下鉄がね、穴が空いててさ、あのまっすぐ浅草の方まで行かないのよ。途中で乗り換え乗り換えだったんだって。それでね、池之端って上野のね、池之端で降りて。で、あの池があるでしょ。で、金井さんの病院ってのはさ、ほとんど反対側の方だったのよ。
Masako: So I went with her to the Daikanyama station, thinking about accompanying her. But they would only sell us one ticket, so grandma went by herself. It's not like she was able to sit down. It was rush hour. So, in the "assertive" manner that grandma was known for in our family, she ordered those around her, "Please don't push. I'm injured!" And then, she had to transfer to another train at Shibuya station. And then the subway from there had damages [along the tracks], so she couldn't go straight to Asakusa. She had to

change [trains] several times. She went to Ikenohata, which is in Ueno, and got off at Ikenohata. And you remember that pond? Kanai-san's hospital was pretty much on the other side of that pond.

佐知子：　かなりおっきな池じゃない。
Sach: That's a seriously huge pond.

正子：　そうよ。で、そこまでまた歩いてったのよ。
Masako: Indeed. Well, she had to get there on foot.

Grandma traveled at least 8 miles from the house to Kanai-san's clinic, equivalent to the distance from the southernmost tip of Manhattan to 125th Street in Harlem.

正子：　で、金井さんのところに着いたら、さすがにもうコタツに入ったら、ぐったりしたって言ってたけどね。もうあったり前じゃない。
Masako: When she reached Kanai-san, she said as soon as she settled into *kotatsu*[7], all her strength left her. Of course, what did she expect?

正子：　そいでその間ママはさ、家にいるからさ、京都に申し込んでさ、電話を。そいで何しろ交換手通していっぺん 切るのよね。それでその交換手がつないでくれるまで待ってるわけ。それでおじいちゃまに連絡してさ、こうこうこういうことでって言ったらおじいちゃ

[7] *Kotatsu*: a low square table that people sit around, extending legs below the table top towards the center where there is a device that emits heat. Instead of table cloth, a square futon cover is used and its edge reaches the floor so the heat does not escape. A table top is placed on top of the futon covering. In colder months, families and friends gather with their legs inside and use the table top for snacking or playing cards.

まが金井さんに電話 したんでしょうね、それから。それで２・３日してからじゃない、おじいちゃま帰ってきてね。あの京都の方でさ、京大病院があるからね、京大病院に話をつけてさ。そこでそこに連れて行くっていうんでおじいちゃまが来て、またその汽車で行ったのよ。それでそこで京大の病院で手術したのよ。傷口をきちっとしたんじゃないの、たぶん。
Masako: Meanwhile, I'm at home, so I requested a call to Kyoto. You make a request to the operator and hang up. You wait for the operator to connect you. So I spoke with grandpa and explained what happened. I suppose he called Kanai-san afterwards. Then he came home 2~3 days later. In Kyoto, there's the Kyoto University Hospital, so he made arrangements to transfer her there. They went back on the train together and she had a surgery at the Kyoto University Hospital. Probably patched up the wound more properly.

佐知子：　タマは残ってなかったの。手術したって、弾は貫通したって言ったけどやっぱり。
Sach: There was no remnant of the bullet? Even though you mentioned that the bullet exited her body, she still had surgery.

正子：　うん、だから出ていっちゃったらしいよ。
Masako: Yes, apparently it was a through-and-through.

佐知子：　じゃ、残ってはなかったわけね。
Sach: So there was no remnant.

正子：　うん。だけどね、入ってね。ダムダム弾とか言ってさ、中でね、ぐるぐる回るんだって。だからね、入口と出口と全然大きさが違ったんだって。そいでなんか京大病院っていうのはスゴイ病院だからさ、レントゲンか何かで見たらもうほとんど心臓スレスレだったてよ。だから運の強い人なのよね、おばあちゃまは。
Masako: Right. But when it enters—it's called a dumdum bullet—it spirals inside the body[8]. Kyoto University Hospital is well equipped, so they took x-ray images which showed that the bullet barely missed her heart. She's blessed with incredible luck, grandma was.

佐知子：　でもおばあちゃまね、それって何かちょっと背中が曲がったのはそのすぐ後？
Sach: Grandma's back got hunched over after that?

正子：　そうね、やっぱりそうなんだろうね。それでいくらなんでもさあ、やっぱり手術するって言っても薬だの何だの今みたいにないからねぇ。大変だったんじゃないの、きっと。
Masako: Well, I suppose so. And even with the surgery, it's not like there were medicines available like we have today. I'm sure it was rough.

[8] Expanding bullets, also known colloquially as dumdum bullets, are projectiles designed to expand on impact. This causes the bullet to increase in diameter, to combat over-penetration and produce a larger wound, thus dealing more damage to a living target. "Expanding Bullet."

正子：　うーん。。。手術、２、3 回したはずよ。1 回じゃ取り切れなかったのかしら。だからね、2、3 年治った後でもね、冬になると寒い寒いって言ってた。 血がずいぶん失われて。そんな輸血なんてあんまりないでしょ。だからさ、やっぱり。

Masako: I think she had two or three operations. I guess one was not enough. Even 2, 3 years afterwards, in the winter, she kept on saying that she was cold. Lots of blood loss. Transfusions were limited as well.

She couldn't specify exactly when this incident took place.

佐知子：　これはもう戦争の最後の年。

Sach: This is the final year of the war?

正子：　戦争のそれは最後の年かなあ。あれ前の年かな。

Masako: Was it the final year—or was it the year prior?

佐知子：　でも終わりの方なの。

Sach: But it was towards the end?

正子：　うん、うん。終りの方だけどさ。終りってそれから空襲がどんどん始まったからさ。

Masako: Yes, yes. It was towards the end, but then the air raids started intensifying.

佐知子：　じゃそれの前はなかったの？

Sach: You mean there were none before then?

正子：　なかったわけよ。全然。だって今と違ってそんなさ、長距離の飛べるあの戦争の飛行機なんかなかったからね。艦載機だけが日本の近くに来てそこから飛ばしたわけだから。

Masako: None. At all. It's not like today when military planes could fly long distances. It wasn't until the aircraft carriers came close to Japan and the planes flew from there.

佐知子：　それにやられたわけ。

Sach: That's what got her?

正子：　うん。

Masako: Yes.

A couple of clues helped approximate the timing of the incident. It had to have taken place between 1944 and June 1945 when grandpa served as the governor of Kyoto. The Ginza subway line, which grandma took to Dr. Kanai's clinic, was partially destroyed on January 27, 1945. It connected many key stations, making it increasingly difficult for people to get around. The damage on the Ginza line helped narrow the timeline since it was repaired in little over a month, by March 10.

正子：　うん。つまりね、金井さんのところに３日ぐらい居て。で、おじいちゃまが迎えに来てさ。それでやっと家にひと晩帰って、翌日京都に行くということになって。それで退院したらばその晩に金井さんが焼けたのよ。病院が。そしたら「傘を１本忘れた」とかいって大変にお嘆きだったけどね(笑)。

Masako: After staying at Kanai-san's place for about 3 days, grandpa picked her up and she came home for a night before heading down to Kyoto. So she checked out [of Kanai-san's clinic] and that night, Kanai-san's place burned down. The clinic. She was very distraught that she had "left an umbrella behind [laughs]."

佐知子：　え、怖かったとかそういうのじゃなくて。

Sach: It wasn't like she was scared?

正子：　うん。でもだって空襲で焼けたときにはもう帰っていたから、家に。でもさ、傘の１本だって買えないからさ。冗談じゃないのよね。

Masako: No. By the time the air raid incinerated [the clinic], she was already home. But it's not like you could buy an umbrella. No joke.

佐知子：　傘の職人はもういなかったから。

Sach: Because umbrella makers were gone [sent to the front lines]?

正子：　うん、そうよ。

Masako: That's right.

佐知子：　でも金井さんはサバイバルしたんでしょう。

Sach: Did Kanai-san survive?

正子：　もちろん金井さんサバイバルしたわよ。

Masako: Yes, he did survive.

While grandma recovered in Kyoto, mom and Ko continued to live in Tokyo. Mom was 15 and Ko, 14.

正子：　で、ママはだからさ、京都なんかに行かれないから、学校もあるしね。で、残って。光ちゃんと。で、誰かが、大人が一緒にいたのよ、その時。お役所の人か何か地方から出てきた。で、まあそのお兄さんみたいな人とそれからもう一人何かご飯を作ってくれる人もいたのかな、何か。それでまあ暮らしてたんだけどね。

Masako: And I wasn't able to go to Kyoto. I had school. So, I stayed back with Ko. There was an adult who lived with us then. Someone from the province who worked in the government. So, it was with that young man and also, I suppose there was someone else who prepared our meals. Well, that's how we lived.

佐知子：　次に会えたのはいつだったの。

Sach: When did you see her [grandma] again?

正子：　いつだったかしら。もうそんなの全然覚えてない。毎日毎日こっちも空襲になってきてね。大変になってきたじゃない。だからもう言われるまんまにその日その日を暮らしていたって感じよ。

Masako: I wonder when that was. I don't remember at all. It became really rough with air raids every single day. So, it was like do whatever you're told to do and live, one day at a time.

In early 1945, the US military launched its Strategic Bombing Campaign with a new weapon, the M69 incendiary bomb. This campaign broadened its target beyond military installations to include densely populated residential areas in the mainland, such as Tokyo, where mom lived.

Increasingly frequent air raids began to disrupt her school days.

正子：　で、だんだん, だんだん夜だけじゃなくて昼間もね、空襲が多くなってさ。学校もさ、空襲警報が鳴ったらば、あの警戒警報のサイレンが鳴ったらばすぐに生徒が帰るってことになってね。帰るたってそんな車でみんな帰るわけじゃないからね。その住んでる家の近くの人達で上級生から下級生までグループがあってさ、そのグループでもって上級生が下級生をかばいながら学校から帰ったっていう感じよ。だからね、今なんかとんでもないわよ、もう電話ですぐに連絡取ったりなんかできるけど、そんなもんじゃないわよ、帰ってくるまで。だから親も心配で。

Masako: Air raids were happening more and more often. It wasn't just at nighttime, but also during the day. Even at school, if the air raid sirens went off, well, if the warning siren went off, they made the students go home. It's not like we were driven home in cars. So, they formed groups of older to younger students who lived near each other, and within the group, the older students protected the younger ones on their way home. These days you could instantly get in touch using [cell] phones, but it was nothing like that. The parents were worried until they returned home.

佐知子：　ママはその時上級生でもなければ下級生でもないっていう感じ。

Sach: You were neither the oldest nor the youngest in the student group?

正子：　うーん、一番トップではなかったわよ。まだね、4年生とか中学3年とかそんなんじゃないの。

Masako: Umm, I don't think I was the oldest. I think I was in the fourth year or the third year of middle school or something like that.

佐知子：　で、そういうことが結構何度もあったの。

Sach: This was frequent?

正子：　うん。だってもう空襲なんか年中だったしね。

Masako: Yes. Air raids were a constant occurrence.

佐知子：　そう。なんかそういう時の話ってある。
Sach: Any stories from then?

正子：　うん。だけどサイレンが鳴ったから、そういう時には集合する場所が決まっているから。学校のシステムはちゃんとしてたからね、わりと。みんなスムーズに帰ったわよ。
Masako: Well, when the sirens went off, a gathering place was designated. The school's system was fairly well established. So everybody went home smoothly.

佐知子：　何事もなく無事だったわけね。
Sach: So, nothing happened and [everyone][9] was safe.

正子：　うん。うん。
Masako: Yes.

She and her little brother, Ko, often had to evacuate to the bomb shelter.

正子：　そのうち、もう夜の空襲がすごかったからね。いつも身の回りのものっていうのは一人ずつにスーツケースを持たされてさ。あんまりくだらないものを突っ込んだりしていると怒られて(笑)。
Masako: Eventually. The nighttime air raids became intense. We were each given a suitcase in which we always had to pack our stuff. When something mindless was thrown in, there was scolding (laughs).

佐知子：　例えば。
Sach: Like what?

正子：　例えば何だったかしら。「そんなもの持ってくんじゃありません」なんて言われたことあるわよ、光ちゃんなんか。どうせ悪いことするなんて光ちゃんなんだけど。でも家にも防空壕があったからね。防空壕って言うか、地面を掘ってさ、ま、それなりに。ちょっと穴よね。
Masako: Well, let's see. I remember Ko being told, "don't bring such a thing." Ko was the mischievous one. But we had a bomb shelter. Well, rather than a bomb shelter, it was something resembling it, dug into the ground. It was just a hole.

正子：　ちゃんとして自分のスーツケースを持って防空壕に入んなきゃいけないとか。
Masako: You had to carry your own suitcase and enter the bomb shelter.

佐知子：　じゃ 常にそういう—。
Sach: So, you had to always—.

[9] In the Japanese language, pronouns are often implied and not said explicitly

正子：　それが嫌だったわね。寝られないし。ほんと。でもそんなのが来なきゃもう戸棚の中でもなんでも寝てられるけどさ。やっぱり外に出てちゃんと入んなくちゃいけないけど、防空壕の入り口がやれられたらもう本当、生き埋めよ。

Masako: I hated that. You can't even sleep. Really. If that weren't the case, we could've slept inside the closet or anywhere. But we had to go outside and make it into the bomb shelter. But if the entrance of the shelter got destroyed, then we'd be buried alive.

These air raids occurred so incessantly that she grew numb to them.

佐知子：　じゃ、空襲は夜だけだったの。

Sach: So, the air raids were only in the evenings?

正子：　初めのうちはね。

Masako: It was, initially.

佐知子：　じゃ、怖かった。

Sach: Were you scared?

正子：　もうね、なれちゃうとね、怖いっていう感覚もない。「あー 終わった」とかね。

Masako: Well, once you get used to it, you lose the sense of being scared.
It's more like, "Ah, it's over."

With no end in sight and the danger increasing, the school decided to let juniors skip the senior year and graduate early so they could move away to safer locations. The graduation was planned to take place in March, 1945[10].

On March 10, 1945, the Ginza line that grandma took to Kanai-san's hospital resumed service. That night, over 300 B-29 bombers showered 1,500 tons of incendiary bombs on Tokyo, mainly on the downtown district, near Kanai-san's clinic, about 8 miles Northeast of Masako's home[11].

佐知子：　大空襲の時 3 月 10 日ね。1945 年。その時はママとコウちゃんは東京にまだいたの。

Sach: March 10, 1945 when the Tokyo Air Raid took place. You and Ko were still in Tokyo?

正子：　だって卒業前だから。

Masako: It was just before my graduation.

佐知子：　じゃ、その時の話をちょっとして。その何て言うの。空襲が始まるってのはわかったわけ。

[10] Academic year in Japan ends in March and starts in April.
[11] "CNN.Co.Jp : 東京大空襲から７５年、知られざる「史上最悪の空爆」　生存者が語る."

Sach: Then could you talk a bit about that time? Like, did you know that the air raid was about to take place?

正子：　だってサイレンが鳴るんだもん。
Masako: Well, the sirens went off.

佐知子：　でも毎日鳴ってんでしょ。
Sach: But it went off every day, right?

正子：　毎日サイレン鳴ってたけどね。
Masako: The sirens did go off every day.

佐知子：　でもこれは普通じゃないっていうのはあったわけ。
Sach: But did you have any inkling that something was different this time?

正子：　全然わかんなかった。
Masako: No inkling at all.

佐知子：　で、それでどうしてたの。何時頃だったの。
Sach: So, what did you do? Around what time of the day was this?

正子：　夜中よ、やっぱり。
Masako: It was in the middle of the night as always.

佐知子：　で、寝てたの。
Sach: Were you asleep?

正子：　寝てるっていうか、本当は防空壕に入ってたんだと思う。だって各家で庭先に防空壕っていうのを掘ってさ、地下にね。掘って、電気も何もないんだけどさ。空襲が終わるまでポンポン音が聞こえるからね、焼夷弾が落ちたりなんかする。だからそれが静かになると。空襲解除のサイレンも鳴ったと思う。だからね、何事が起こってるか、どこで何事が起こってるかなんて全然わかんない。
Masako: Well, I wasn't really sleeping, but I think I was actually inside the bomb shelter. Each family dug shelters in their own gardens. There are no lights inside or anything. During the air raid I could hear incendiary bombs dropping, going *boom! boom!* somewhere. Then it would get quiet. I think there was a siren that signaled the end of the air raid, but I had no idea what was going on from inside the shelter.

佐知子：　3 月 10 日の空襲がそんなにスケールの大きいっていうのはもう終わるまでわかんなかった。
Sach: So, you were not aware of how extensive the March 10th air raid was until it was over?

正子：　うん。だってもう表参道なんてみんな焼けたのよ[12]。
Masako. That's right. I mean the entire [boulevard of] Omotesando[13] burned down.

佐知子：　それで出てきてどうだったの。防空壕から出てきて。
Sach: So when you came out of the bomb shelter, what was it like?

正子：　出てきて、終わった、終わった、で終わりよ。だって分かんないもん。
Masako: I came out and it was like, "it's over, it's over." That's all. But I really didn't know.

佐知子：　で、次の日の朝になって家が建っててって感じでまだ。
Sach: And the morning after, the house was still standing.

正子：　だから家は建ってたけどね。
Masako: Yes, the house was still standing.

佐知子：代官山は他は。
Sach: How about other places in Daikanyama?

正子：　うちの通りはその頃はまだ建ってたと思う。
Masako: I think at that point, the houses on our street were all there.

佐知子：　あの通りね。
Sach: That street[14].

正子: うん。でも何軒もなかったけどね。うちと森谷さんと大澤さんって森谷さんのお嬢さん。それと川路さんと橋本さんと、片っぽが 5 件ね。向こう側は伊達さんって侯爵家のご隠居所だったからさ、それで執事の家があって。それから黒澤さん。で、実吉さんってママの同級生。それで角が梶原さん。だから 10 軒ぐらいしかなかったの。
Masako: Yes. It's not like there were that many houses. It was us, Moritani-san, Osawa-san who is the daughter of Moritani-san. Then Kawaji-san, Hashimoto-san. Five houses on one side. Across the street was Daté-san, the retired Marquis with the home of his butler. Then Kurosawa-san and Saneyoshi-san, who was my classmate. Then on the corner was Kajiwara-san. So it was only around ten homes.

佐知子：　10 軒とも大丈夫だったわけ。
Sach: And all ten homes remained intact.

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[12] *Omotesando* was not attacked in the 3/10/1945 The Great Tokyo Air Raid, but on 5/25/1945 in the "Yamanote Air Raid," which was the second most devastating attack on Tokyo. "表参道が燃えた日…3600 人死亡「山の手大空襲」を振り返る（栗原 俊雄）｜現代ビジネス｜講談社（1/5）."

[13] A major boulevard in Harajuku, which is only 1.5 miles from mom's home

[14] Refers to the street in front of my grandparents' house. Eventually, mom and her sister built their respective homes on that property. I spent parts of my childhood and teenage years in that house.

正子：　ママがいた間はね。その時は。
Masako: While I was still there, they were.

正子：　東京もそのときに。だって銀座やなんか下町が全部やられて 10 万人ぐらい亡くなって。それでも山手でもさ、青山通りとかあの辺全部焼けたからね[15]。
Masako: In Tokyo, Ginza and all of downtown got incinerated and around 100,000 people were killed. And even in Yamanote [uptown area, including Shibuya and Minato wards], Aoyama boulevard and all that whole area got burned down.

The Great Tokyo Air Raid is still the single most deadly and destructive bombing raid in human history. Over 100,000 civilians are believed to have been killed, quadruple that of the better-known attack on Dresden. Over 1 million were left homeless[16].

Highly flammable, the M69 incendiary bombs were particularly effective in destroying Japanese residential homes which were made of combustible materials like wood.

[15] Actually, Yamanote area, including Aoyama boulevard was attacked on May 25, 1945 in the Yamanote Air Raid. “表参道が燃えた日…3600 人死亡「山の手大空襲」を振り返る（栗原 俊雄）｜現代ビジネス｜講談社（1/5）.”

[16] “CNN.Co.Jp : 東京大空襲から７５年、知られざる「史上最悪の空爆」　生存者が語る.”

Houses torched in flames from the air raid. Source: Time Life Pictures/Wartime Japanese Govt. Photo/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images

Eventually, the indiscriminate attack on residential districts hit very close to home.

佐知子：　焼夷弾が落ちて不発だったっていうのはうちだけで、このご近所には影響あったの。

Sach: The incendiary bomb that fell on our house didn't detonate, but were any of the neighbors affected?

正子：　だから前の伊達さんのところから。反対側は全部焼けたのよ。

Masako: So starting from the Daté residence across the street from our home, the entire stretch on that other side all burned down.

佐知子：　じゃ、伊達さん、杉本さん、

Sach: So, Daté-san, Sugimoto-san,

正子：　うん、うん。 実吉さん。

Masako: Yes, yes. Saneyoshi-san

佐知子：　全部焼けたの。で、森谷さんは。

Sach: All burned down? How about Moritani-san?

正子：　うちと森谷さんと川路さんとか橋下さん。

Masako: Moritani-san, Kawaji-san, Hashimoto-san, and us.

佐知子：　大丈夫だったの。
Sach: They were okay?

正子：　うん。こっち側は全然大丈夫だったの。安西さんもそうじゃ ない。
焼けなかったんじゃない。
Masako: Yes. All on our side were spared. Also, Anzai-san. Their home didn't get burned down.

佐知子：　それでどうしたの。その焼けちゃった人たち。焼けてお亡くなりになっちゃったの。
Sach: What happened to them? Those whose homes were incinerated. Did they get killed?

正子：　いや、みんな逃げたんでしょ。疎開したり。
Masako: No, they probably all fled, or were evacuated from Tokyo.

After the Tokyo Air Raid, Masako and Ko evacuated to Kyoto.

佐知子：　その京都で誰かにお世話になったの。
Sach: Did someone take care of you in Kyoto?

正子：　そう。その家でね。やまばなとか言うところで。結構なお座敷だったけどね。で、おばあちゃまとさ。マコっちゃんはね、学童疎開に行ってたからね。おめちゃとママかな。
Masako: Yes. We stayed in that house that was in Yamabana, or something like that. It had quite impressive tatami rooms. It was with grandma, Kazuko [younger sister], myself [and Ko]. Makoto [younger brother] was away on *gakudo-sokai* [school-aged kids around 9 thru 12 were sent away from the cities to the countryside for safety].

In June, her father, Zentaro, became the governor of Osaka. Rather than bringing his family along to Osaka, which was one of the US military targets, he rented a house for them in suburban Kyoto which was deemed relatively safe.

正子：　おじいちゃまもたまには様子見に来るけどさ、おじいちゃまも忙しいからね。でも帰るたびにもうこれが最後かと思うもん。途中でさ、空襲に遭って撃たれるということもあるしね。だから何かねもう今じゃ考えられないような生活よ。
Masako: Once in a while, dad would come to check us out, but he was busy. But every time he'd leave, I'd think, perhaps this is the last time to see him. It was possible for him to get hit by an air raid enroute. It's inconceivable today, everything about how we lived [back then].

Her thoughts are grounded in reality. In June when grandpa transferred to Osaka, the US air raid showered Osaka with the M69 incendiary bombs. As it descends, the bomb casings open, dropping 38 individual hexagonal tubular bombs each releasing a 3-foot-long linen ribbon that

ignites with napalm. Hundreds of these bombs with burning ribbons falling from the sky made these attacks look like “showers of fire[17].”

M69 incendiary bombs showering Osaka on 6/15/1945. A view from Mainichi Newspaper Osaka HQ[18]

[17] Hiratsuka, *Nihon Kūshū No Zenbō*, 32.

[18] “大阪大空襲 当時の様子 [写真特集 2/9]｜毎日新聞.”

A Teenager's Concern

At a more personal level, mom recalled how the air raids altered her lifestyle.

> 正子：　もうなんかそれこそ寝るたってさ、もう着替えて寝るなんてことはできなくなってさ。
> Masako: Even sleeping, well, you can't even change [into pajamas] before you go to bed.

She dreaded having to wear monpé, a drab outfit that all women had to wear.

Here is a recollection of Mrs. Ayako Koshino, a dressmaker, from an interview conducted by Haruko Taya Cook and Theodore F. Cook:

> When the war started…Even if you'd had a dress made, you couldn't wear it. I remember when skirts were no longer acceptable. So women wore pants with wide legs, called *monpe*, and pants suits, like today….
>
> Anything with any sense of elegance at all was forbidden under the prohibition regulations.
>
> During the war, everything was National Defense Color. That was the army's color, the color of uniforms….After the war, that color was in oblivion for a long time.[19]

The Monpé troops marching in Osaka. February 1941. Source: Mainichi News[20]

[19] Cook and Cook, *Japan at War*. P.185

[20] Mainichi News, Clothing during the war, 2012/07/19 "[写真特集 12/41] | 毎日新聞."

Mom also commented on the color of monpé. She recalls when her mother came home wounded:

正子：　夕方帰ってきてさ。で、ダークカラー。ほとんど黒に近い。もんぺ なんていうのはそんな派手な色じゃ ないからね。だから血なんか見えなかったけどね。血だらけだったんじゃないの。

Masako: She came home in the late afternoon, in her dark-colored, practically black monpé—monpé was not colorful—so I didn't see any blood. But I suppose she must've been covered in blood.

She was still in high school during the war. Up until then, she wore a stylish tailor-made school uniform. So monpé in drab colors was nothing exciting for a teenager to wear. Every day. And, at night:

正子：　パジャマなんて着られないわよ。

Masako: I couldn't wear pajamas.

佐知子：　ええ！ じゃ、寝るとき何、どうしてるの。

Sach: What!? Then what did you wear?

正子：　だからそのまんま寝るのよ。いつでも起きられる。だからその終戦になって窓を開けたときに今日から寝巻きがちゃんと着られるっていうので 嬉しかったわけ。

Masako: So, you sleep as is. Be ready to get up anytime. That's why I was so happy when the war ended and I opened the window because [I knew that] from today on, I would be able to wear sleepwear.

佐知子：　何、単に窓を開けられるだけじゃなくて寝巻きも着られなかったの。

Sach: You mean it wasn't just not being able to open the windows but you couldn't even change into sleepwear?

正子：　だっていつ空襲になるかわかんないじゃない。それから着替える暇なんかないもん。

Masako: You never know when the air raid strikes. There's no time to change when it happens.

佐知子：　じゃ、ずっと洋服のままの生活だったの。

Sach: So you wore [monpé] around the clock?

正子：　そうよ。だけどおんなじ洋服を毎日毎日着てるわけでもないし、下着も取り替え、洗濯したりしなくちゃなんないとか。で、買えることは買えるけど、だいたいがね、もんぺだったから、みんな。

Masako: Of course. But it's not like I wore the same thing every single day. I had to change and launder my underwear. You were able to buy clothes, but they were all monpé.

佐知子：　それは変な話、寝る前に替えるの、それとも朝イチに替えるわけ。
Sach: Strange question, but did you change before going to sleep or the first thing in the morning?

正子：　そんなこともその時その時よ。寝る頃に空襲があるかもしれないし、寝ちゃってからかもしれないし。
Masako: That depended on the situation. There might be an air raid towards bedtime, or after you fell asleep.

佐知子：　じゃ、替えられる時に替えるっていう感じ。
Sach: So you changed whenever you were able to.

It is understandable that when she learned that the war was over:

正子：　モンペなんてさっさと脱いじゃったしね。
Masako: One of the first things I did was change out of my monpé.

佐知子：　でも開放感の一つとしてはその洋服もそう。
Sach: In terms of a sense of relief/*kaihoukan*, clothing also played a part?

正子：　そう。開放感のひとつになるわよねえ、やっぱり。着るものって気分にずいぶん影響するじゃない。
Masako: Yes. Definitely, it was an element of relief/*kaihoukan*. What you wear significantly affects your mood.

佐知子：　だいたい 16 歳なんて一番そういうのが大事な年頃だしね。
Sach: And that's a pretty important thing for a 16-year-old.

正子：　そうよねえ。ほんと。15 か 16、そこらへんでさ。
Masako: Yes, really. I was around 15 or 16.

She had to be prepared to evacuate immediately when the air raid siren went off, then be ready to join the "bucket relay" as soon as the air raid ended.

正子：　で、終わりもサイレンなの。もう敵はいなくなりましたよっていうサイレンが鳴るわけ。そうするとみんな防空壕から出てってさ。それでそれこそ自分の家とか近所に、隣のうちとかに焼夷弾が落ちて燃え始めたなんていうとそのバケツリレーか何かで消さなきゃいけないのよ。
Masako: There's a siren when it ends, signaling that the enemy's gone. Then, everybody comes out of the shelters. If an incendiary bomb hit and your own home or a home in the neighborhood, like your next-door neighbor's, were burning, we had to put out the fires with bucket relay, or anyway we could.

佐知子：　なに、それ。
Sach: What's that [bucket relay]?

正子：　バケツに水を汲んでさ、それでみんなリレー。もう並んで、その水のところから火事場のとこまで。それでそのバケツを汲んじゃそれを渡してさ。自分がそれ持って走るって言うんじゃなくて。
Masako: You fill buckets with water, then you conduct a relay. We line up next to each other, starting from the source of water to where it's burning. And you pass those buckets to the next person, instead of carrying and running with that bucket yourself.

佐知子：　で、ママもやったの、それ。
Sach: And you did that?

正子：　だってそういう訓練もあるんだもん。
Masako: Well, yes, there was training for that.

佐知子：　えっ! 学校で?
Sach: What? In school?

正子：　学校でもあったし、町会でもあった。
Masako: In school and also in the *chōkai* (neighborhood association).

So that night—when WWII ended—mom was in her room on the second floor of the rented place in Kyoto. It was the first time in many years that she no longer had to worry about air raids and wear monpé around the clock. She was finally able to wear yukata or pajamas and sleep through the night:

正子：　大体安心して布団に入れるっていうのがね、やっぱり。布団だってそんなふかふかなんてやってられないもん。
Masako: It was just a relief, being able to get into the futon without all the worries. Really. There was no getting comfy in the futon before then.

And, opening the window to feel the breeze. There was such a sense of relief.

In Japanese, this feeling is written 開放感:

開放感　*Kai-hou-kan*/a sense of relief

開 *kai*: open

放 *hou*: release

感 *kan*: sense of

Visual Dialogue

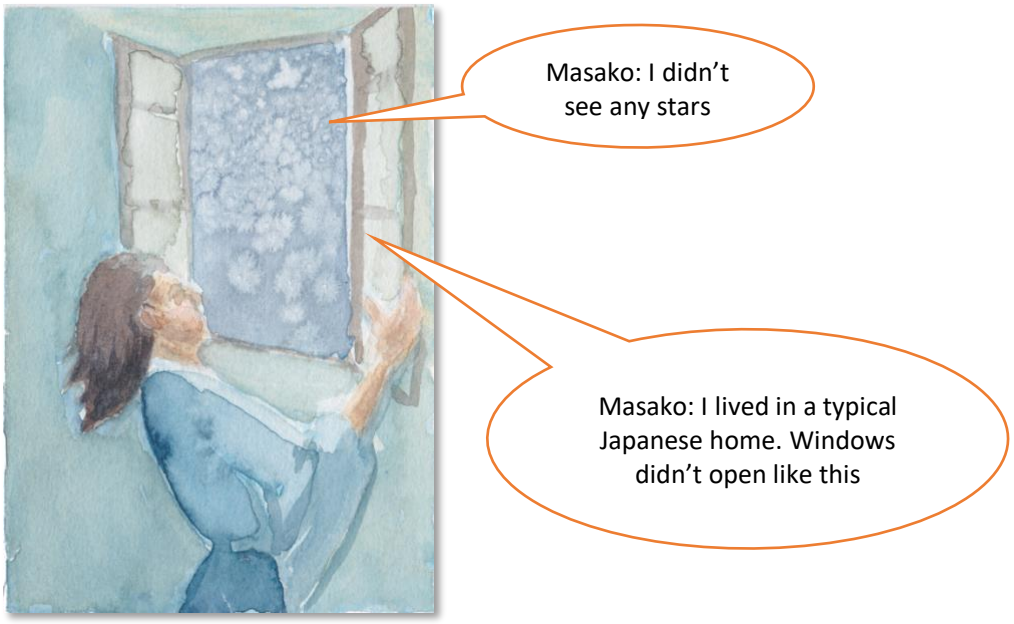
Co-creating “Fresh Air”

Hearing her story of the last day of the War, I wondered what that feeling of *kaihoukan* 開放感 was for mom when she opened the window and felt the breeze.

Since we have no photographs from the war years, let alone of that particular moment, I attempted to recreate that scene in a painting. My outside thesis advisor, Jessica Benjamin, agreed to teach me the skills to accomplish this. She suggested using watercolor since the image does not always have to be precise. The medium is ideal for representing memories in which certain details were vivid while others remain vague, have been forgotten or never registered in the first place. Unlike oil which requires days for each layer to dry, watercolor dries within minutes. So the narrator's response could quickly be incorporated into subsequent versions.

<u>First version and the narrator's reaction</u>
This is my first attempt at an image. Mom opens the window to catch the breeze. We experimented with the sky by sprinkling salt on the wet paint to mimic stars.

Mom's reactions to the image are described in the bubbles:



<u>Subsequent versions</u>
It was easy to remove stars. However, changing the window to a style that did not open like French windows posed a challenge since mom could not recall the specific mechanics of the windows.

佐知子：　その[玉音を] 聞いた日は京都にいたの。
Sach: You were in Kyoto when you heard [the Emperor announce the end of the war]?

正子：　うん。
Masako: Uh huh.

佐知子：　で、京都の官邸で窓ってどういう感じだったの。
Sach: So, what were the windows like in the official residence in Kyoto?

正子：　京都は普通の日本家屋よ。
Masako: It was an ordinary Japanese home in Kyoto.

By this time, she had moved out of the official residence.

佐知子：　じゃ、いわゆる雨戸。
Sach: So, they were traditional *amado* 雨戸[sliding window coverings made with wood to give protection from rain and hurricanes]?

正子：　２階は窓だった。
Masako: Upstairs had windows.

佐知子：　窓。じゃ、窓っていうのはこうやって開ける窓だったの。それともこういう感じの窓だったの。
Sach: Windows. So those windows opened like this [mimicking opening windows towards oneself like with French doors]? Or were the windows like these [gesturing sliding left to right]?

正子：　こういう感じじゃなかったかしらね。だって自分の家じゃないからさ。借り家だからね。
Masako: It may have been like that [sliding]. Afterall, it wasn't our own house, just a rental.

佐知子：　こんな大きな窓じゃないもん、大体がね。
Sach: Certainly not this big [pointing to the oversize windows in her dining room in Illinois].

佐知子：　どれぐらいのサイズだったの。
Sach: How big was it?

正子：　だって日本の家屋、考えてみたらそんなに大きくないでしょ。
Masako: Well, if you think about it, Japanese homes aren't that big after all.

佐知子：　知らない。だって障子だったらガラって感じで。
Sach: I don't know. After all, shoji screens slide open.

正子：　まあね。それからまあ雨戸を閉めちゃうとかさ。そういうこともあるだろうし。だけど２階の窓なんて雨戸なんかないから。雨戸っていうのは上から下までのこういう戸のところで、外にあるし。おばあちゃまの家なんかは窓でも雨戸があったよね。

Masako: True. Also, *amado* could be closed. That could be the case. But there are no *amado* upstairs. *Amado* extends from the top to the bottom like a door [pointing to the sliding glass door that connects the dining room with the terrace], and is outside. [But] grandma's house did have *amado* on the windows.

佐知子：　代官山の家だって、ほら食堂に。
Sach: Our house in Daikanyama[21] also had them in the dining room.

正子：　そうそう。あれは戦後よ。洋式の家だから。日本式っていうのは必ず何て言うの、庭に面しているとか家の外のガラスのところには必ず雨戸があったからね。

Masako: Oh yes, but that was [built] after the war. That was a western-style architecture. Japanese style always had *amado* by the glass [door/window] right outside the house facing the garden.

Since this aspect was not important enough for mom to remember, I decided to make that part vague.

<u>Painting her clothes</u>
I also wondered what she was wearing. Visual details usually surface from closed questions which more often come up in a regular conversation. In contrast, oral history interviews use open questions, then follow up on the response. With mom, she rarely brought up visual information in those follow-up dialogues. So working on this painting with her brought up topics that we might not have discussed otherwise.

佐知子：　戦争中は寝るときももんぺ着てたって言ってたんだけどその終わったってわかった日、そのママが窓を閉めないで済むっていう—。
Sach: During the war, you said that you wore monpé even when you went to sleep, so that night when you found out that it was over and you didn't have to close the window—.

正子：　うん、開けたって言った。
Masako: When I opened the window.

佐知子：　あの時は何着てたの。やっぱりもんぺだったの、その時もまだ。
Sach: What were you wearing then? Was it monpé, even then?

正子：　夏だったからね。８月でしょ。だから何か薄い夏服じゃない。
Masako: It was the summer. It was August. So, probably some light summer clothes.

佐知子：　あ、じゃあもうその時には、その日にはもう着替えられるっていう感じだったわけ。
Sach: Oh, so at that point, on that day, you were able to change.

[21] Daikanyama: A town in Tokyo where our houses were located.

正子：　もう空襲はなくなったって感じでさ。だからその晩は寝巻きに替えたんじゃないかしら。
Masako: There was a sense that there will no longer be air raids. So that night, I think I did change into sleepwear.

佐知子：　じゃあもう何年ぶりに寝巻きって感じだったの。
Sach: So it was like finally getting into sleepwear after some years?

正子：　2 年ぶりぐらいね[22]。
Masako: It's been a couple of years.

佐知子：　で、寝巻きってちなみに何だったの。
Sach: Incidentally, what was the sleepwear?

正子：　寝巻きは浴衣みたいなのだとかね。それからパジャマだったりね。
Masako: Sleepwear was yukata[23]. Or pajamas.

佐知子：　その時はどうなんだったか覚えてる。
Sach: Do you remember what it was then?

正子：　う〜ん 覚えて―。もう、だって。 寝巻きなんかはその持って逃げるものの中には入ってなかったと思うよ。
Masako: Hmm, do I remember. Well. I don't think sleepwear was one of those things that I packed [in the suitcase] for evacuation.

佐知子：　じゃ、その日はまだもしかしたらもんぺだったのかもね。
Sach: So maybe you were still in your monpé that day.

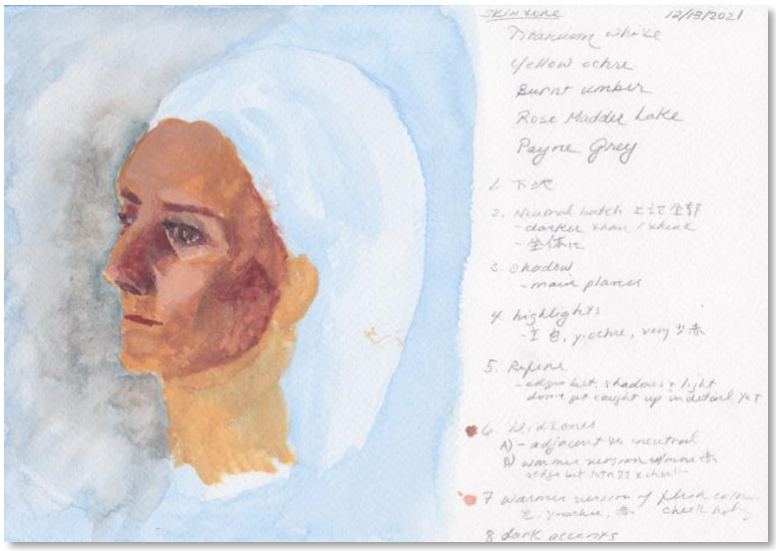
正子：　もんぺはもうさっさと脱いだと思う。だし家の中にいればねぇ、もんぺ なんて履いてないもんね。
Masako: I'm sure I changed out of monpé immediately. Besides, inside the home, we weren't wearing monpé.

So clothing was yet another element to keep vague. One thing I did keep in mind was not to make it white because pure white yukata is only worn by the dead. I decided to mix in a little red to the white to give a hint of warmth without making it literally pink.

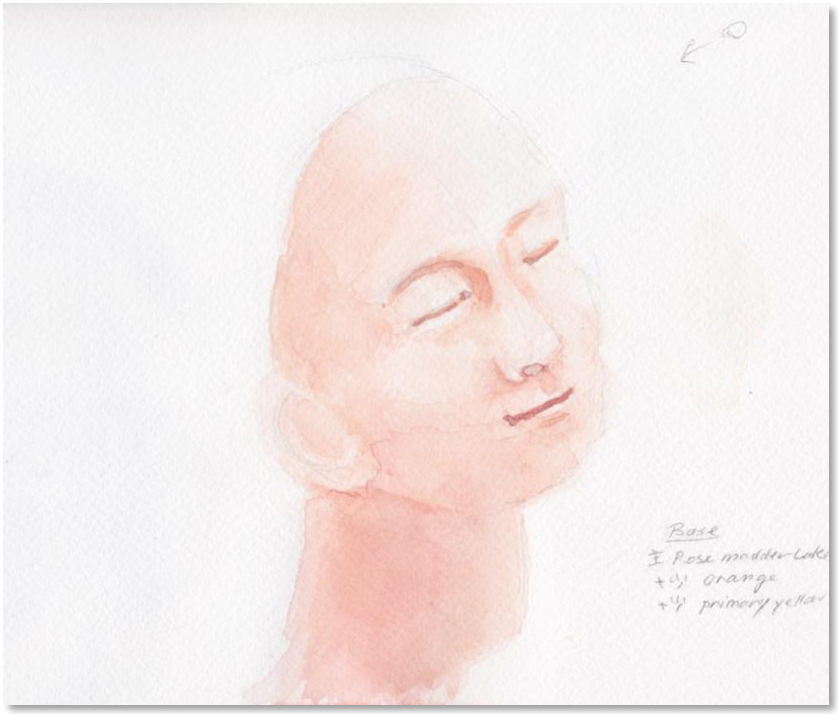
[22] Actually, it may have been less than one year as she said in another part of the interview and the air raid on the homeland did not last more than a year. However, to her, this lifestyle must have felt much longer.
[23] Yukata: Casual light cotton kimono

Drawing her face

At this point, I was not technically able to capture her facial features.



I did not know what colors to use or how to mix them. The scribbles next to this portrait record the paint colors used and notes on how to create a face. The issue with this version is that it is not the face of an Asian teenager. So, I followed a video tutorial that specifically demonstrated how to paint an Asian woman and this is how it evolved:



Once I felt comfortable painting an Asian face, I wanted the face to look like hers. However, no photograph exists of the 16-year-old mom. So, I used this photo of when she was likely in her very late teens or early twenties.

Using this photo as a reference, I made a sketch, making her look slightly younger by rounding out some features while retaining her characteristic nose, lips and eyebrows.

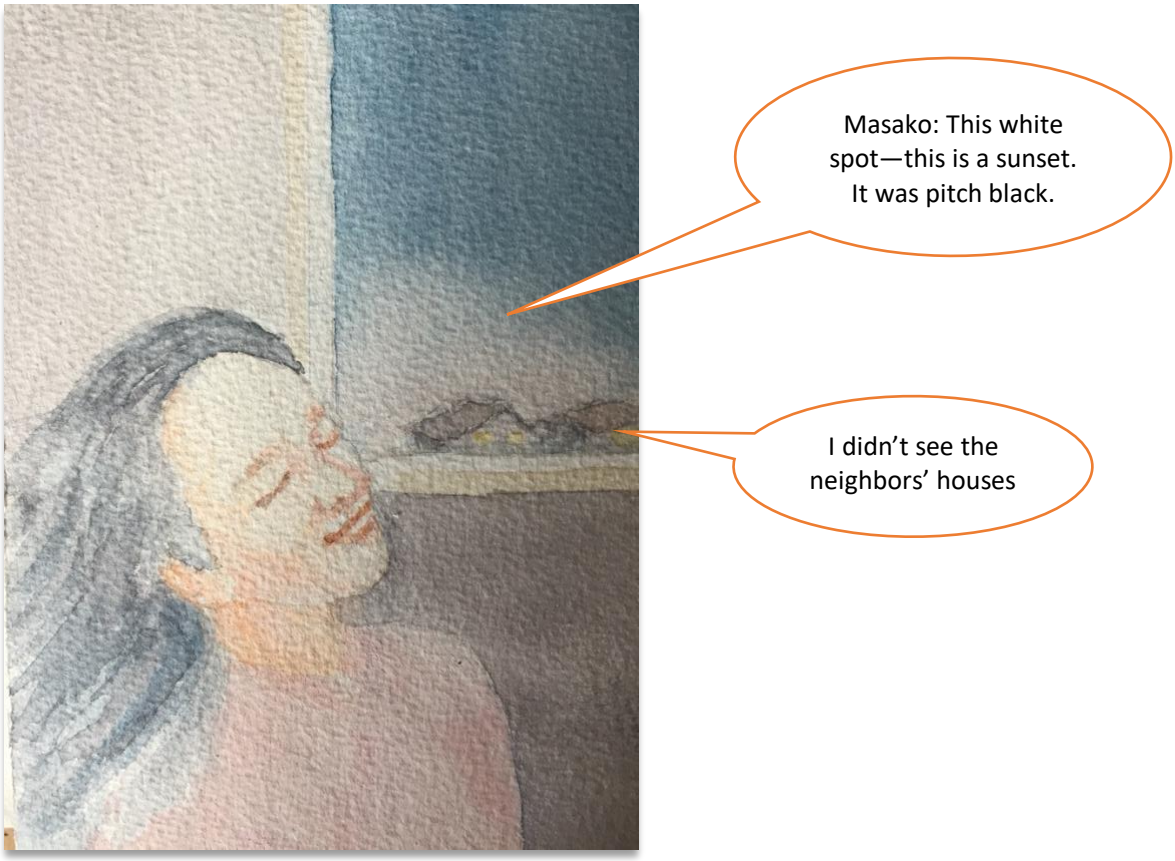
The process of altering the image forced me to scrutinize her features in ways that went beyond what is possible from just looking at the photograph.

I still needed to tilt her head and create that feeling of enjoying fresh air. However, I lacked the ability to do that from this drawing. Asking her to pose was not possible since we were not co-located. So, I decided to use myself as the model, made this selfie, and transposed her features onto the general outline of my face. The result is shown in the next painting.

Speculative dialogue

As I developed the painting, I started to wonder if her sentiment of fresh air was something that others in her neighborhood also felt. This led me to explore the pre-war architecture in a typical suburban Kyoto neighborhood. The houses were not aligned precisely in grid-formation like Manhattan or the city center of Kyoto, but stood in various angles. Also, the windows were very small, reflecting the need to minimize the extreme elements of snow and heat from entering the house. In the new version, I went ahead and included the roofs of the neighbors' homes with lights on without confirming with mom. I wanted to see how the painting triggered her memories.

On March 10, 2022, mom saw the revised painting. I was in New York City and she was in her home in Illinois with Jessica. Since we had technical issues connecting on Zoom, Jessica pulled up the digital image of the painting that I had posted on our shared Google Drive and showed it to mom on her Apple iPad. This was her reaction:



She immediately confirmed that there was nothing to see: neither stars nor her neighbors. And, it was pitch black. I found this remarkable since I cannot recall any time in my life when I saw a sky that was completely devoid of light or stars. This visual reality struck me, imagining how dramatic and scary it must have been to witness hundreds of B-29s that covered the skies as they flew overhead and dropped tons of bombs that became the showers of fire.

Mom was equally amazed that her reality was not obvious to me.

While she rejected my speculative images, she complimented me on the overall painting:

> Masako: You did a good job showing the sensation of how good the breeze felt.

Her response assured me that I was on the right track. So for the final version, I focused on making the sky "pitch black" and retaining that sense of enjoying the breeze.

Final version

Although she recalls the sky being "pitch black," simply using black paint creates a flat rectangle. That would not convey the sense of air movement that she ultimately felt, and the depth of space that characterizes a sky. So I experimented with multiple colors to create spatial depth and darkness. I also used various brushes to create the texture of air flow. I also needed to use a piece of paper that had a smoother texture than the previous painting.

After a series of trial and error, I created this final version. It still does not quite resemble mom's face, but it's the best I could do. The key points were to convey her enjoying the fresh air, make her look like a 16-year-old, and show the air movement in the "pitch black" sky.

Narrative

Norms in Abnormal Times

- *Shouganai/Atarimaé*
- Perilous Period
- Abiding by Rules

Shouganai/Atarimaé

Over our multiple interview sessions, what began to emerge was the special nature of mom's relationship with her father, Zentaro. Having only witnessed their interaction as that between an adult and her elderly father, it never seemed that they were particularly close. However, learning their earlier history made me appreciate how much they cared about each other.

> 佐知子：　ママのこの間の話聞いてるとき、何て言うの。おじいちゃまがいろいろと劇とかも連れてってれたとか言うと、結構パパっ子だったのね。
> Sach: Listening to your recollections like when grandpa took you to many places such as the theater, it sounds like you were quite the daddy's girl.
>
> 正子：　だって最初の子だもん。で、しかも三十過ぎてるからね。そいでね、アーちゃんの話だとおばあちゃまがヤキモチ焼いてたんだって。
> Masako: Well, I was his first child. According to aunt Aa-chan [grandma's younger sister], grandma was apparently quite jealous.
>
> 佐知子：（笑う）
> Sach: [Laughs]
>
> 正子：　まあ、馬鹿馬鹿しいじゃない。
> Masako: How silly is that?
>
> 正子：　鎌倉の家行くときおじいちゃまがね、それこそムービー カメラ持っていったのよ。で、子供が泳ぐところや何か得意になって映していたのよ。で、子供たちがバチャバチャ泳いでたりなんかするとおじいちゃまなんて嬉しがって撮ってたから、浜で。
> Masako: When we'd visit Kamakura [his in-law's home], he'd bring a movie camera. And he proudly taped the kids swimming and stuff. He filmed the kids as they splashed around on the beach with such delight.

Mom smiled as she recalled this memory and was disappointed that the film no longer exists.

Aa-chan (left) with her mother (my great-grandmother)(right) in their home in Kamakura

Grandpa faced death every day until the day before the war ended with the B-29 bombers attacking Osaka for a total of 33 times.[24]

Given that continuous threat on his life, I asked if it was difficult for her whenever he had to leave Kyoto for Osaka.

In the Japanese language and culture, it was more appropriate to phrase this as a closed question to an older person, particularly my own mother, rather than the open version, "how did that make you feel?" In Japanese, the closed version sounds more respectful, empathetic and gives an opportunity for the narrator not to respond if the question feels too prying. Phrased in the open structure, it makes the narrator, at least mom, feel defensive if it's not something she would want to respond to.

> 佐知子：　それぐらいさ、可愛がられて—おじいちゃまとは私は本当にいい思い出しかないからね—だからそういうおじいちゃまって、ほら帰るたびにさ、今生の別れかと思うとつらかったでしょ。
>
> Sach: I only have good memories with grandpa. So if he doted on you that much, then whenever he left [for Osaka] and you wondered if this could be the last time, that must've been hard.

[24] Hiratsuka, *Nihon Kūshū No Zenbō*, 90.

正子：　うん。
Masako: Yes.

正子：　そうね。
Masako: Really.

正子：　うん。
Masako: Yes.

正子：　でもそれはね、やっぱりね、全員公平にそういう立場だからさ。それは同じだったけどね。

Masako: But that—you know, everybody was in that same situation, equally. So, mine was no different.

佐知子：　そういった意味じゃママは全員公平だったって言っても、よくほら学校のお友達のサポートが大事だったって言ってたけど。

Sach: In that sense, even though you say that everybody was equally [impacted]—you know you had mentioned that your schoolmates' support was crucial.

正子：　うん。

Masako: Yes.

佐知子：　やっぱりそういう同級生とか上級生もみんな似たような立場なんだっていうそういうことが心の糧になるわけ。

Sach: So the fact that everybody—your classmates and senior [class students]—were all in the same situation provided a sense of emotional support?

正子：　うん、そうよ。だから当たり前だと思った。心の糧もヘチマもないし。自分だけが気の毒とかそういうこともなかったね。戦争なんだから当たり前だって思ってたけどね。

Masako: Oh yes. I thought it was *atarimaé* 当たり前 (the norm) because it's war.

I found many of her recollections shocking or trauma-inducing, but her tone was a matter-of-fact. Expressions like *shouganai/shikataganai* (what can one do?) and *atarimaé* (the norm) reflect her attitude of accepting the situation without question.

Japanese immigrants in the US (*issei*) who were incarcerated in concentration camps during the War also used these terms to rationalize their adverse circumstances. Given the high stakes of questioning the social norms that were dictated by the military, this attitude likely protected many in this generation from getting into trouble.

Nonetheless, she shared her emotions in response to a more mundane question:

佐知子：　じゃ、ママ戦争の間なんて朝ごはん食べて、その時は光ちゃんが一緒で。

Sach: So, during the war, Ko's there with you at breakfast.

正子：　だからいつもママが言うでしょ。朝ごはん一緒に食べてもね、晩御飯に何人帰ってくるかしらっていうのはすごく嫌だったって。だから戦争が終わったなんていうのは悲しみとかなんとかいうよりさ、子供だし、もうそういういろんな心配がなくなってうれしいって思うわよ、やっぱりね。

Masako: You know how I always say, even if we had breakfast together, I wondered how many would return for dinner. I really hated that. So when the war ended, rather than

feeling sad—after all, I was only a child—I was happy that I no longer had to worry about any of those things, really.

Perilous Times

A child she was. Her parents protected her from the political, economic, and social realities of the time. Born in 1929, at the start of The Great Depression which devastated many families around the world, she does not recall being deprived in those years. Perhaps the economic impact was not acute since a significant expenditure, such as housing, was often provided as part of her father's job.

Nonetheless, Japan was destroying any sense of stability around the region by pursuing its imperialistic ambitions in Asia, invading many places including China, Korea, and Taiwan.

> 正子：　そんな凄い戦争になるとは。戦争だったわよ、もうとっくにね。
> Masako: I never expected it was going to become such an intense war. We'd already been at war by then.

For most of her childhood, Japan was engaged in aggressive militaristic actions.

Societal violence had affected the family. I was shocked when she casually mentioned this while talking about an otherwise peaceful scene of how much she enjoyed eating the dishes her paternal grandmother prepared for her.

> Masako：　でも大井のおばあちゃまがね、おじいちゃまの方のおばあちゃまが泊りがけでいらしたときなんかは茶の間の火鉢でね、ゆっくり筍を煮てたからおいしかったわよ。
> Masako: When grandma Ooi[25], your great-grandma on grandpa's side, used to stay overnight, she would slow cook [bamboo shoots][26] using hibachi[27] in the sitting room—those dishes were delectable.

> 正子：　おじいちゃまは次男だか三男だかなんか男の子のほうがみんな死んだみたいだからね。結局残ったのはおじいちゃまとそのお兄さんだけなんだけど。間にやっぱり何人かいてね。一人とっても仲のいいお兄さんで優秀な人がいたらしいんだけどね。そのお兄さんは大学を出てから、その頃支那って言ってたんだけど、中国でやっぱりね、なんていうのかしら。学校と違って何か研究所みたいなのができたんでしょうね。それでね、そこに就職したのよ。
> Masako: Grandpa was either the second or the third son. Your grandpa and his older brother survived, but all his other male siblings had died. There were a few siblings, and one was very smart and he was particularly close to him. That one, his older brother, graduated from college and moved to China. Not for school but he got a job in some kind of a research facility that was apparently built.

[25] Great-grandma Ooi, here referred to as "Grandma Ooi" lived in Ooi, where Ooi River is. This is the location where grandma Kikué received first aid after being shot.
[26] Upon reviewing the transcript, mom asked to specifically indicate "bamboo shoots."
[27] Hibachi used charred wood, like *bichotan* which emits heat gently.

正子：　だけどね、なんか突然亡くなったってのは何か殺されたかなんかしたらしい。
Masako: But he apparently suddenly died here. Evidently, he was murdered.

正子：　おじいちゃますっごくそのお兄さんが好きでね。いつもそのお兄さんが生きてたら、生きてたらって言って。亡くなったところに行ってみたいっていうのは一生の願いだったのよ。
Masako: Grandpa really liked that brother. He would say all the time, “if only he were alive, if only he were alive.” He yearned all his life to visit the place where he died.

佐知子：　そのおじいちゃまのお兄様がお亡くなりになったのもママが生まれる前の話。
Sach: So that older brother of grandpa died before you were born?

正子：　だからママが生まれる前の話よ。だってお兄さん—多分お兄さんだと思う。
Masako: This was before I was born. That older brother— I think it was his older brother.

正子：　だって学校を卒業してすぐその支那に行ったんですもん。その頃のいろんな本を読んでいると確かになんとか学院だかなんだか知らないけどずいぶん日本から優秀な人たちが行ったみたいよ。
Masako: He left for China soon after he graduated. According to various books I’ve read of that period, it seemed that there was some kind of school there that many high achievers went to.

正子：　でもずいぶん殺された人もいるみたい。
Masako: But apparently, many were murdered there.

正子：　パパのおじいさまの弟もそうだったみたいよ。
Masako: It seemed that your dad’s grandfather’s little brother also suffered the same fate.

佐知子：　何、行ったとか殺されたとか、両方？
Sach: What, you mean he went or got killed, or both?

正子：　なんかそっちの方で亡くなったのよ。
Masako: Evidently, he died there.

正子：　でもね、今思い出したらやっぱり清見おじいちゃまの弟っていうのは樺島家っていうところ に養子に行ったのよね。よう子ちゃんといういとこのお父さんなんだけど。その樺島のおじ様もそういう亡くなり方をそういえばしたみたいな話よ。
Masako: Now that I remember, the younger brother of Kiyomi [mom’s father-in-law] was adopted by the Kabashima-family. He’s the father of [your] dad’s cousin, Yoko. He also seemed to have died like that as well.

佐知子：　物騒な世の中だったんだね。
Sach: Those were perilous times, huh.

正子：　だから中国と日本って戦争になる前から何かそういういろんな関係があったのよね。それで盧溝橋事件というのが始まりで。それは太平洋戦争の始まる何年か前。
Masako: So there was a lot going on like that between China and Japan, long before the War. Then there was the Marco Polo Incident and that happened several years before the Pacific War.

佐知子：　1937 年とかそんな感じでしょ。
Sach: That was sometime around 1937, right?

正子：　うん。太平洋戦争というのは 41 年でしょ。
Masako: Yes. The Pacific War was 1941.

佐知子：　だからいわゆる大東亜戦争ってやつだよね。
Sach: It was the so-called Great East Asian War.

正子：　で、その前、日本でもちょっとクーデターみたいなのがあったじゃない。二・二六事件。それがママの小学校 1 年生の時だからね。ほとんど子どもの頃って戦争の話が多かったわね。
Masako: But right before then, even inside Japan, there was a bit of a coup d'état. The 2-26 Incident[28]. That was when I was in the first grade. Most of my childhood was dominated by stories of wars.

[28] The 2–26 Incident was an attempted coup d'état on 26 February 1936. It was organized by a group of young Imperial Japanese Army aiming to rid the government and military leadership of their factional rivals and ideological opponents. Source: "February 26 Incident."

Abiding By Rules

Growing up in a society that increasingly tightened rules on every aspect of life with maniacal watching of citizens' every move and words, the best way for her parents to protect her was to teach her not to behave in a way that could raise any suspicion.

> 佐知子：　ちょっと前にママが、ほら私が聞いたことない格言でさ、「梨(なし)の木の下で冠」。
> Sach: A little while ago, you mentioned an aphorism that I wasn't familiar with, something about a crown under the pear tree.
>
> 正子：　ああ、「李下(りか)に冠を正さず」。
> Masako: Ah yes, don't straighten your hat under a pear tree.
>
> 佐知子：　うん。あのキュウリに—何だっけ。
> Sach: Yes. And the one about the cucumber—what was that one?
>
> 正子：　うん。「瓜田(かでん)に履を入れず」。瓜 (うり)の田(た)って書くの。 キュウリも入るんだけどさ。みんな地面に地生えを張って実がなるからね、収穫するときに地面から取るからさ、地面に手なんか、下の方の草なんかに手なんか突っ込んでるといかにも盗ってるみたいに見えるから靴のヒモなんぞは絶対に直してはいけないって。
> Masako. "Don't tie your shoelaces in the gourd field." Or a cucumber field. Anywhere that grows and bears fruit on the ground. When harvesting, you reach down to the ground to pick the crops, so if you bend down to tie your shoelaces in a crop field, it's going to look like you're stealing something.
>
> 佐知子：　で、やっぱり思想犯とかさ、そういったことが結構厳しく取り締まられている時代だったからね。おじいちゃまももしかしたら子供を守ろうとしてそう言うことを。
> Sach: So, this was in an era when they clamped down on thought crimes. Is it possible that grandpa was teaching you this way in order to protect his children?
>
> 正子：　もちろんそうよ。
> Masako: Of course, that was the reason.

The military had zero tolerance for non-conformity to its rules and policies. A special police unit, *kempei-tai* 憲兵隊, arrested and tortured journalists and anyone suspected of breaking rules, both official and unspoken. They were the Japanese equivalent of the German gestapos. To date, reference to kempei-tai 憲兵隊 still makes people cringe.

> 正子：　あれはおじいちゃまからいつも言われてたの。だからね、人に誤解を与えるような行動をしてはいけないっていうわけ。
> Masako: That was something dad said all the time. That you cannot do things that could be misconstrued.

佐知子：　で、どういうときにそういうことを言い始めるわけ、おじいちゃまは。
Sach: So what are the circumstances that prompted grandpa to say things like that?

正子：　何かね。例えば鎌倉に行くとか熱海に行くとかなんていうときにさ、こう田舎の道を汽車が走るじゃない。それに梨の棚なんかあると、あれは梨の棚で梨はこういうこととつながるっていうので話されたりするわけ。
Masako: Let's see. For example, when we used to travel to Kamakura or Atami, the train would go through the countryside. And if there's a pear grove, he would point to it and explain how the pear grove links to that teaching.

佐知子：　別に何かママとか光ちゃんが悪いことしたからって言うんじゃなくて。
Sach: So it's not like he said these things because you or Ko were misbehaving?

正子：　そういう例えに使われてるのが、あれがナシの棚だとか。それからあれがキュウリの畑だとかっていうふうに教わったの。
Masako: They were used as an analogy, like that's a pear grove, or, that's a cucumber field. That's how we were taught.

佐知子：　それは物心ついたときからそういう躾だったの。
Sach: You were brought up that way ever since you could remember?

正子：　そうよ。
Masako: That's right.

佐知子：　たとえばどういうことを言われたの。
Sach: What did he tell you [not to do]?

正子：　何か知らないけどしちゃいけないことがいっぱいあった(笑)。
Masako: I don't recall but there sure were a lot of things that we weren't allowed to do [laughter].

佐知子：　例えば。
Sach: For example?

正子：　例えばもへちまももう 92 歳にもなったら無理よ、そんなの (笑)。
Masako: I can't recall any examples. That's impossible at 92!

[Laughter]

正子：　本当にもう大変だったわよ。例えば家の外に出てね、駅に行くまでにお隣とかご近所のおばさま方にお会いしたり、誰かにお会いしたら必ずお辞儀をしなきゃいけないとかさ、そういうことから始まるわけ。

Masako: It was a lot. For example, you step outside of the house. If you run into some lady in the neighborhood or somebody, you have to greet them with a bow. That's how it started.

正子：　おじいちゃまはね、内務省の役人でしょ。内務省っていうのは国内のいろんなことを取り締まるお役所だからね、そこの役人の家族がさ、そういうルールに反するようなことは絶対にしちゃいけないわけよ。みんなの模範になるように、お手本になるようなのを守った生活をしなきゃいけないっていうのでさ。

Masako: Dad was an official at the Interior Department. And the Interior Department has to strictly manage the affairs of the country. So the families of those officials were absolutely forbidden to break any rules. You had to be an example for everybody, adhering to all the rules.

Those "rules" were strictly enforced everywhere, not just by the *kempei-tai*, but also by *chōkai*.

佐知子：　町会ってなによ。

Sach: What is *chōkai*?

正子：　町会っていうのはね、隣組って言ってさ、近所。変な奴が、必ず威張ったような(笑)。でもそういうのが見回りに来て、それこそピアノの音なんて聞こえたら大変なご注意があったりして。

Masako: *Chōkai* or *tonari-gumi* (neighborhood association), are basically, the neighbors. There's always some weirdo on a power trip [laughter], snooping around. And that kind of person would snoop around and if they hear the sound of piano, they'll give a big lecture.

佐知子：　あったことあんの、そういうの。

Sach: You experienced something like that?

正子：　ううん、ママはあったことないけどさ。そういうふうだったみたいよ。そのうち西洋音楽なんてしちゃいけないというムードになったから絶対に触れなかったけどね。

Masako: No, I never experienced that. But apparently, it was like that. Eventually, the mood turned against western music, so I never touched [the piano].

The parents not only raised her to behave in ways that prevented her from getting in trouble but they even gave her a name that reflected this aspiration. So far, she seemed to have lived up to her name: Masa 正 (i.e. "correct") + ko 子(i.e. "child").

But, one could only behave for so long. Afterall, she was a teenager, starting to develop her own agency.

正子：　それでね、卒業して京都に行くって言ったときに音楽の先生がね、学校のご自分の同級生でね、とってもいい音楽の先生がいらっしゃるからね、ちょっと訪ねてみたらって言

われたのよ。それでもうやることないし、知事官舎の並びだったの、その先生の家が。歩いて行かれる距離でね。ちょっと離れてたけど、それでやることないからさ。
Masako: When I told my music teacher that I'll be going to Kyoto after graduation, she suggested that I pay a visit to her classmate who's an excellent music teacher. I had nothing to do [in Kyoto]. And that teacher lived within walking distance on the same street as the governor's residence. It was a bit away but I had nothing else to do.

正子：　お尋ねしたら、ま、その先生は声楽の先生だったからね、声楽を教えてくださったのね。京都は東京と違ってそんなうるさくなかったのよ。で、あの家の造りだから奥の方だと音が漏れないでしょ。音が漏れる代官山のうちみたいなのも隣組の組長とかいうのがいつも回っててさ、どういう音が聞こえてくるかとかどういう生活をしてるかとか監督してるわけよ、近所を。
Masako: So I went to see her. She happened to be a voice teacher, so she gave me singing lessons. Kyoto was different from Tokyo in that they weren't that strict. The way that the house was built, the sound wouldn't travel beyond the back part of the residence. Sounds always escaped the house in Daikanyama [Tokyo], so the head of the neighborhood association will always be making the rounds in the neighborhood, eavesdropping and monitoring the lifestyles.

佐知子：　戦争中。
Sach: During the war.

正子：　うん。だから西洋音楽の音なんて聞こえたら早速憲兵に言いつけられて。
Masako: Yes. So if they heard the sound of western music, they'd immediately report [them] to the *kempei-tai*.

正子：　だから学校を卒業してから京都にいったでしょう。その時はまだ終戦後じゃなかったの。
Masako: I went to Kyoto right after I graduated. The war hadn't ended then.

佐知子：　でもその本当に短い期間のときにそこで何を習い始めたの。
Sach: So during that really short span, what did you learn?

正子：　声楽。
Masako: Voice.

佐知子：　そんな余裕あったの。
Sach: You had that kind of mindset?

正子：　いや、だって京都は呑気だもん。そして知事官舎で暮らしてるからさ。ま、学校には行ったけどさ。
Masako: Well, Kyoto was laid back. And, I was living in the governor's official residence. Well, I did attend school as well.

佐知子：　その宗教の学校ね。
Sach: You mean that religious school.

正子：　宗教学校行ったけど、後は知事官舎の中にいるから。知事官舎でとてつもなく広いからさ。だって洋館と日本館とあって洋館の方なんてあんまりよく知らないぐらいだった。
Masako: I attended the religious school, but after school, I'm back inside the governor's residence. And it's immensely spacious. I mean it had both western style and Japanese style mansions. I hardly knew the western-style mansion.

佐知子：　あ、そう。で、そこにピアノがあったわけ。
Sach: I see. And there was a piano there?

正子：　ピアノはなかった。だから声楽をね。
Masako: There was no piano. That's why I did voice.

佐知子：　じゃ、ママ歌も習ったわけ。
Sach: So you learned to sing?

正子：　歌も習ってね、その時に。だからメロディーっていうのはすごい綺麗だっていうのがわかったわけ。
Masako: I learned to sing. That's when I found out that melodies are beautiful.

佐知子：　その声楽なんて。洋風の音楽を教えていけなかったんでしょ。
Sach: That voice lesson, wasn't it forbidden to teach western music?

正子：　もちろん。だけど京都のうちっていうのは表側に音なんか聞こえない家じゃない、奥が深いから。だから植村先生のおうちっていうのも本当の京都の昔風の家だからね。聞こえなかったんだと思う。
Masako: Of course. But the house in Kyoto was built long and deep, so you couldn't hear anything from the streets. Uemura-*sensei* [teacher] lived in a traditional Kyoto home, so the sound also likely didn't travel.

佐知子：　でもおじいちゃまって一応政治のお役人。
Sach: But wasn't grandpa a government official?

正子：　おじいちゃまなんかには話さないわよ。知らなかったんじゃない。
Masako: I didn't tell him. He probably didn't know.

佐知子：　だっていけなかったんでしょ。完璧にいけなかったんでしょ。
Sach: But it was forbidden, right? Like totally not okay.

正子：　いけないってね。ルールはなかったけどね。敵国のそういうことをしちゃいけないのはもう常識だったのよね。だけどさ、何か知らないけど。だからモーツァルトとかシューベルトとかそういうのの歌を習ったわけ。

Masako: Well, there was no explicit rule forbidding it. But it was common sense not to do things like that of the enemy country. So, I don't know. That's why I learned songs by Mozart and Schubert [European and not American composers].

Only a teenager would have taken such a risk, knowing all along that breaking any rules, no matter how trivial, could get her arrested by the *kempei-tai*. The parents were extra careful that their children led by example and conformed to the norm. Had the *chōkai* found out and snitched to the *kempei-tai*, it would have disgraced the family, causing a scandal and possibly, resulted in a loss of her father's job. I was stunned to learn what she did but mom was quite nonchalant. Her expression was like that of a child who got away with some prank.

This is how I found out for the first time that she had voice training. It explained why her voice was so clear and strong for her age.

Visual Dialogue

Co-creating Home

Picturing family life necessitated imagining what her home looked like. Afterall, the Japanese word for family 家族 *kazoku*, is composed of two Chinese characters, 家 home and 族 tribe. However, co-creating images of her home turned out to be quite a challenge. Visualizing and describing interior or exterior structures was not easy for her. Our unsuccessful and futile exercise in recreating the window of her house in Kyoto should have been a hint.

The following is our dialogue when we tried to recreate the image of her parents' home in Daikanyama, where she lived for many years:

> 佐知子：　要するに正面から道に立ってこうやって見てる分には家っていうのはこうやって玄関が、ま、門があって。かなりラフなスケッチだけどさ。で、2階建てになってて。屋根は何、どういう感じなの。
>
> Sach: So from the front, standing on the street looking in[to the house] like this, the front entrance of the house is here, and well, here is the gate. This is a very rough sketch. And it's two-stories. What did the roof look like?

> 正子：　だから全部瓦よ。
>
> Masako: So it's all *kawara*[29] tiles.

> 佐知子：　こういう感じなの。
>
> Sach: Is it like this?

> 正子：　もちろん、そう。
>
> Masako: Yes, of course.

> 佐知子：　じゃ、こういう感じで。
>
> Sach: So, it's like that.

> 正子：　うん。
>
> Masako: Yes.

> 佐知子：　で、それでこれが二階建てになってるわけ。で、それで。
>
> Sach: So this part is two-stories. Then?

> 正子：　つくづく門から眺めたことなんてなかったからね。
>
> Masako: I never really scrutinized from the front gate.

That statement explained a lot about why she had difficulty describing her own home.

> 佐知子：　だけどこっち側は一階だけなのね。
>
> Sach: But this side is only one story high.

[29] *Kawara* tiles are unique to Japanese architecture.

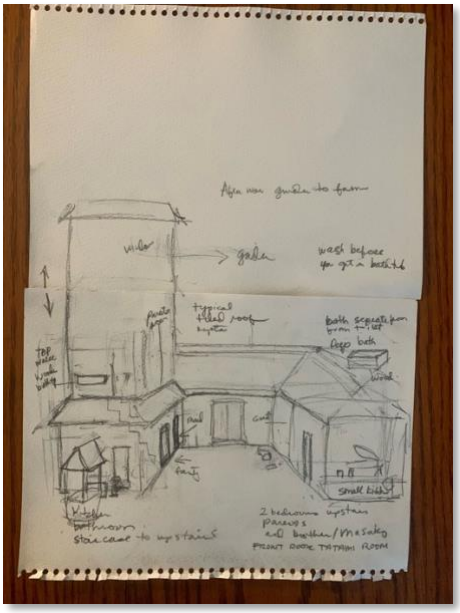
正子：　そうだと思う。
Masako: I think so.

佐知子：　なるほど。
Sach: I see.

正子：　うーん。
Masako: hmmm

Ironically, the main impetus for using images was due to her difficulty in visualizing and then describing her own grandmother's home.

Failing to reconstruct the image of the house, I asked Jessica if she could better reproduce the image that more accurately represented mom's recollection. This is what she made with mom:



Even with this detailed sketch, we were still unsure about its precision. We agreed that there was no way that there was a tower. We suspected that mom said that this sketch was "good," because whatever detail that mattered to her was adequately represented.

I still wondered why she had difficulty recalling her own house. Her response to my question asking her to describe a typical dinner scene provided a clue.

正子：　夕方 6 時には晩御飯になって。それでなんかみんなで—みんなって兄弟とおじいちゃまとおばあちゃま。おじいちゃまは時々宴会かなんかでいらっしゃれなかったこともあるけど。とにかく、あんまりそんな情景なんて毎日のことだから覚えてないけどね。

Masako: Dinners were usually at 6 pm. That's when everybody—well, everybody meaning siblings, grandpa and grandma. Grandpa sometimes couldn't join because he had to attend official banquets. But scenery and what not, I don't really remember those ordinary things too well.

正子：　なにしろ代官山に落ち着くまで 13 回も引っ越したから。

Masako: You know, until we settled down in Daikanyama, we had moved 13 times.

正子：　13 回引っ越したっていうのは東京の中。

Masako: We moved 13 times [just] within Tokyo.

佐知子：　東京の中？ オーマイ・ガー![30]

Sach: Just within Tokyo? Oh my god!

正子：　で、だいたい渋谷区の中でも引っ越したし。港区でも引っ越したし。あの内務省ってさ、昔は何か国内のことは全部警察も含めて管理してたお役所があってね、その内務省の役人だったからね。で、あの課長ぐらいからね、もう 2、3 年で役が変わるのね。知事もそうだったけど。そうするとね、その役に対してこの官舎が付いてますっていうところがあるわけ。で、官舎の付いてる役もあれば官舎のついてない役もあるからね。それで引っ越すわけよ。だから役目が変わったらすぐに官舎出なきゃなんないの。

Masako: We moved within the Shibuya-ward and even within the Minato-ward[31]. The Department of the Interior, where grandpa worked, in those days oversaw everything domestic, including the police force. If you're a manager or higher, you get rotated to a new position every two to three years. That was the case for governors [like grandpa]. Some roles come with an official residence and others don't. Either way, you have to move. So as soon as the position changes, you have to move to a new official residence.

[30] Question marks and exclamation points are only used in written dialogues, and even then, very selectively.
[31] Tokyo consists of 23 "wards," including Shibuya which includes Daikanyama where their home was.

Map of Tokyo with its 23 wards including Shibuya and Minato wards

This could explain why she doesn't remember much about those homes. Nonetheless, she still struggled to describe the house they ultimately acquired and lived in for many years. In fact, she could not recognize her own piano or the interior of her house when she was presented with photos of them. This is not from memory loss but architectural features were not something she paid much attention to.

Dojo Vendor

This is in stark contrast to how vividly she recalls the details of the *dojo* (a type of fish) vendor.

> 正子：　その桜田門っていう警視庁の裏の家に居た時によく来てたわけ。
>
> Masako: [The dojo vendor] used to come to our street often when we lived behind the Police headquarters in Sakurada-mon.

> 正子：　夜はね、どじょうなんてあったわよ。柳川。おじいちゃまが好きだからって。おじいちゃまが食べるって。
>
> Masako: We had dojo sometimes for dinner. Yanagawa-style. That's because grandpa liked it that way.

> 正子：　で、どじょう屋はね、また自転車で回ってくるのよ。それでザル持ってね、「じゃ、これにいっぱい」なんていうとそこで割いてね、ザルに入れてくれるのよ。
>
> Masako: The dojo vendor would come around on his bicycle. We'd bring a basket and say, "fill this up please." Then he'd prepare the dojo and put them in the basket.

佐知子：　なに、その豆腐屋みたいに自転車の後ろにバットみたいなので泳いでいらっしゃるわけ。
Sach: You mean just like the tofu man, there's a vat on the back of his bike and they're swimming inside it?

正子：　そうよ。そうよ、もちろん。
Masako: Yes. Yes, of course.

佐知子：　で、まな板とかも持ってるわけ。
Sach: And he'd have a cutting board?

正子：　うん。
Masako: Yes.

正子：　全部道具は持ってきて。だって、包丁とまな板と目玉のところにギュッと刺すのとか。それくらいでしょ。
Masako: He'd bring all the tools. Like a cutting board, [dojo prep] knife and that thing used to pierce the eyeballs. I think that's about everything.

佐知子：　それをどうやって食べたの。
Sach: How was it prepared?

正子：　あ、それ柳川ってね。食べたことのない？お鍋でね、平たいお鍋でどじょうを煮てさ、甘辛くゴボウと一緒に煮るのよ。
Masako: Oh, in yanagawa-style. You never had it? It's a hot pot. You slow cook the dojo in a shallow pot with burdocks and flavor it sweet and savory [similar to sukiyaki].

佐知子：　で、卵を落とすんでしょ。
Sach: And you drop an egg into it, right?

正子：　そうそう、最後に卵。
Masako: Yes, yes. You finish it with an egg.

佐知子：　で、三つ葉 散らすんでしょ。
Sach: And scatter *mitsuba* [similar to cilantro, but a milder indigenous herb].

正子：　おいしいのよ。
Masako: It's delicious.

佐知子：　食べたことないけど。あのレシピブックは見たことあるから。
Sach: I've never had it but have seen it in cookbooks.

正子：　東京でどじょう屋に行くと柳川があるわよ。浅草でほら。

Masako: If you go to a Dojo restaurant in Tokyo, they serve it yanagawa style. [There's one in] Asakusa.

佐知子：　あ、そうそうそう。ある。メニューは見たけど。
Sach: Oh yes. They do have it. I've seen it on its menu.

正子：　食べたでしょ。
Masako: So, you had it?

佐知子：　いや、食べたことないけどメニューは見たことある。
Sach: No, I haven't had it but seen the menu.

正子：　なるほどね。
Masako: I see.

佐知子：　うん、うん、うん。なかなか頂く機会には恵まれないんだけど。
Sach: Yeah, I haven't had the opportunity to try it out.

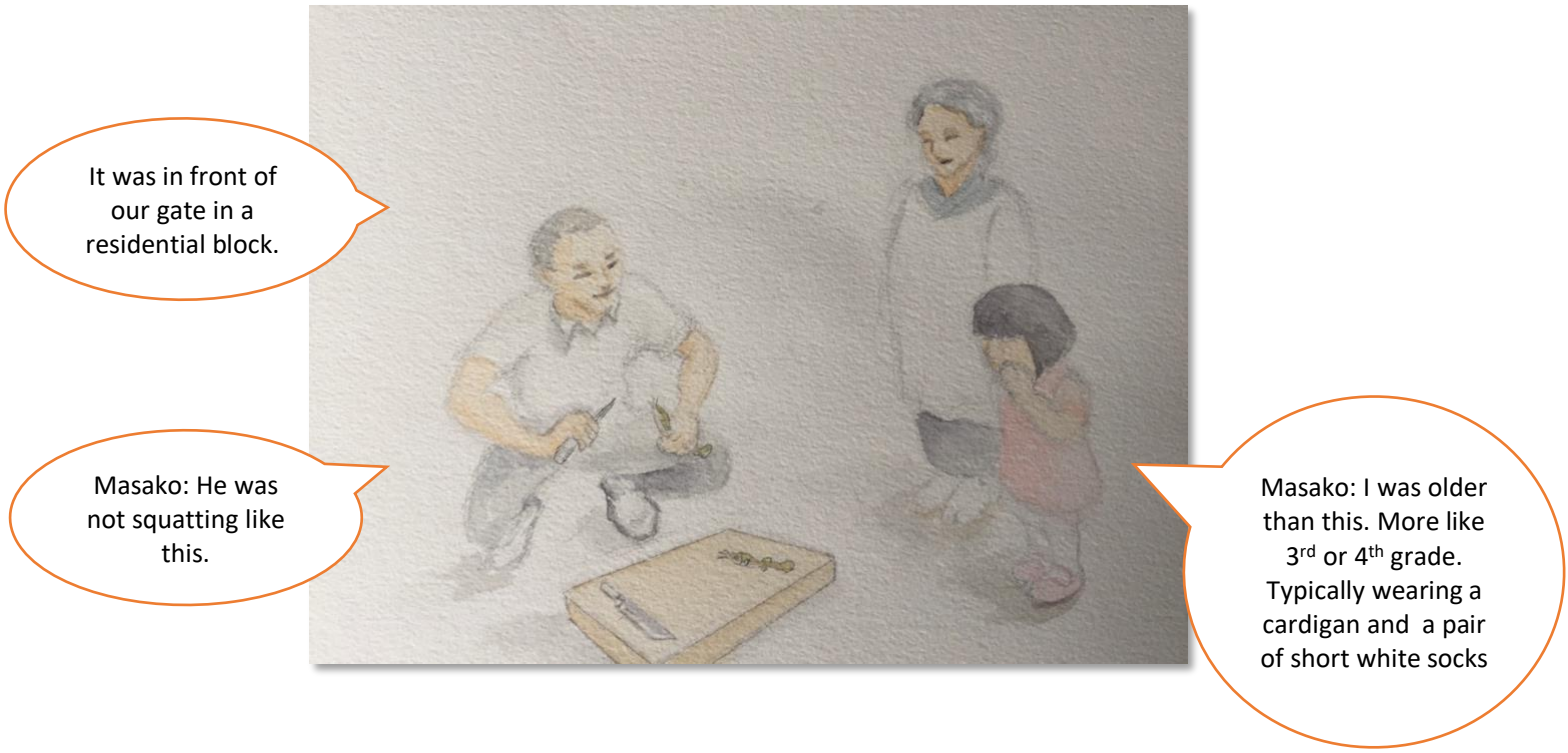
正子：　なかなかね。だってせっかく食べるのにどじょうなんてね。
Masako: Well, if you're going to eat out, why choose dojo[32].

Images of dojo vendors could not be found on any Google search, so this provides a rare glimpse of a quotidian life in pre-war time Tokyo. Having dojo fileted by your front gate was likely a very local experience in the Sakuradamon area where she lived.

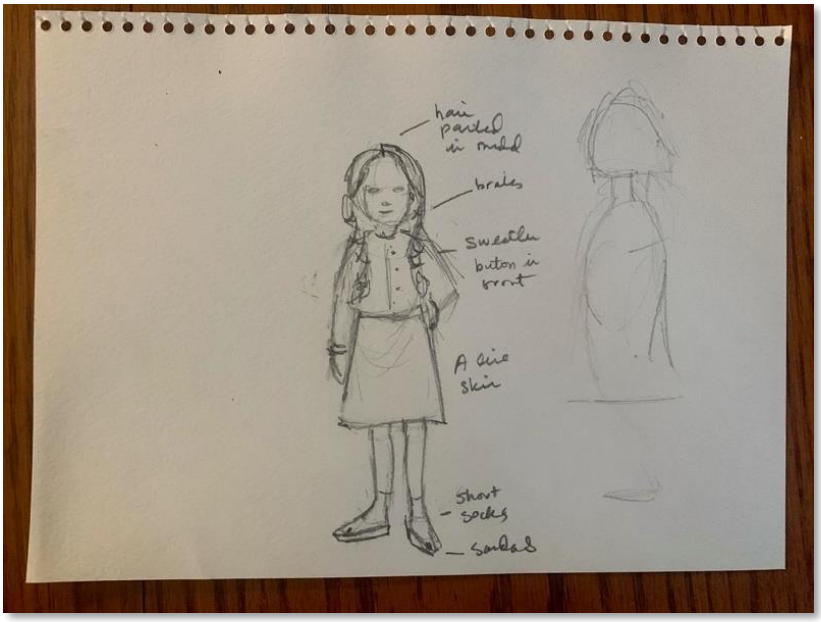
Jessica, mom, and I reviewed the draft painting I made of her as a little girl observing the dojo vendor in action as a part of the March 10 remote collaboration session. I texted Jessica the images and she showed them to mom using an iPad.

Mom was quick to respond to the image:

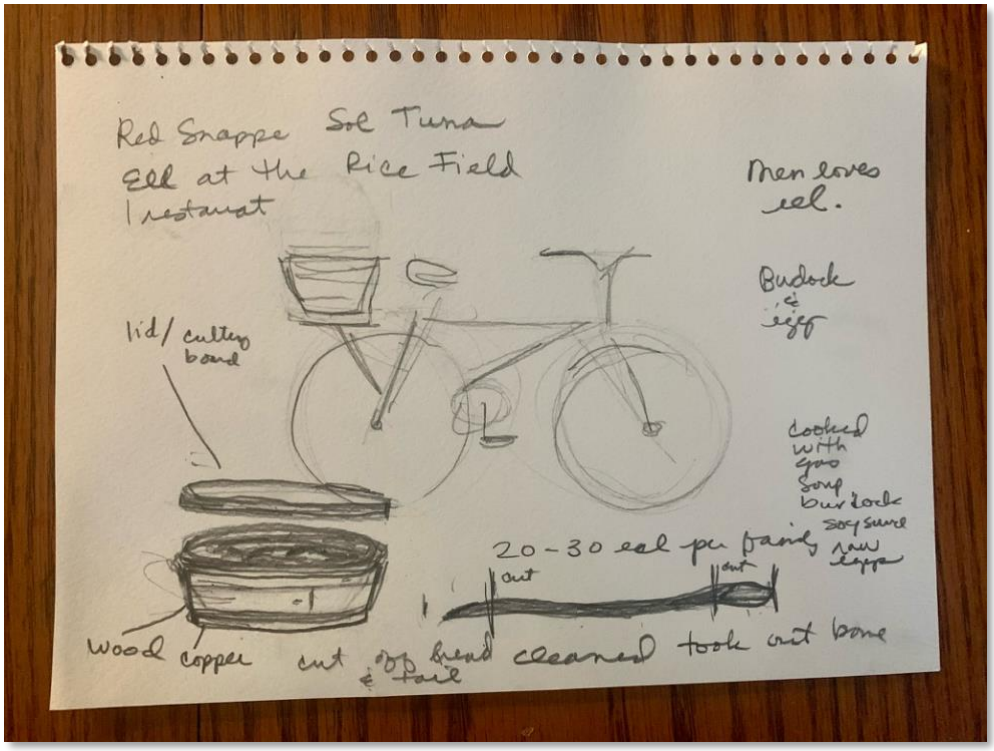
[32] Dojo has a reputation for having a slightly muddy flavor. Dojo looks like a small version of eel, but eel is considered more delectable and highly sought after, making it a more preferable alternative.



Given mom's response, Jessica quickly drew up what more closely resembled mom's description of herself:



Jessica also made a quick sketch of the bicycle, dojo, and the vat they were transported in:



Armed with Jessica's sketches which were approved by mom as references, I created this image:

I have been pleasantly surprised at the interest people expressed when they saw this image. In a way this makes sense, given the explosion of food-related shows and people sharing photographs of their meals on social media. This particular image, being so rare and specific to historic times, likely piqued the curiosity of many, regardless of age or nationality. Personally, I still don't find dojo particularly enticing. However, if I ever go back to Japan, which has been closed off due to the pandemic, I might try the yanagawa-style hot pot and reminisce about my family.

Narrative

Wartime Conditions

As the war intensified, her parents and the school could no longer shield her from the deteriorating conditions.

正子：　だんだん、だんだんよ。だんだん物がなくなってきたのよ。
Masako: Little by little. Things gradually became unavailable.

正子：　何かそれでもそれほどモノがなくなるとかって言うこともなかったんだけどさ。パールハーバーが始まってからよ、どんどん悪くなったのは。
Masako: It wasn't like things were disappearing that much, but it got much worse after Pearl Harbor.

佐知子：　ママなんてまだティーネージャーにもならないぐらいの歳なのに自分でもやっぱり見えてわかるぐらい変わってきたわけ？自分でも周りがもう—。
Sach: You were hardly a teenager but things changed so much that even you could see what was happening around you?

正子：　だって配給があったりしたもん。
Masako: Well, we had rations.

佐知子：　配給はそれまでなかったのね。
Sach : So there were no rations before then?

正子：　それまでないけども、やっぱりだんだんきつくなってくると配給制度っていうのが。パールハーバーの前から配給だったのかしらね、もう覚えてないけどね。
Masako: Not until then, but as things gradually got tighter and tighter, the rationing system was established. Maybe we already had rations before Pearl Harbor. I don't remember.[33]

佐知子：　じゃ、もうどじょう屋どころじゃなかったわけね。
Sach: So no more dojo vendor.

正子：　どじょう屋の頃はまだ盧溝橋事件も始まってなかったかもしれない。
Masako: I think the dojo vendor was around, up until the time of the Marco Polo Incident.

佐知子：　お豆腐屋さんはあたし子供の頃は覚える。
Sach: I remember the tofu vendor that used to come around when I was a kid.

正子：　豆腐屋だって代官山に越してきてからだし。お豆腐屋は駒沢通りの向こうにあったわけでしょう。だからもうずっと来てたわけよ。

[33] In Tokyo, rice, wheat, and liquor could only be obtained through a ticketing system by 1941 but by 1942, miso, soy sauce, salt, and clothing became available only through ration. Hiratsuka, *Nihon Kūshū No Zenbō*. p. 68

Masako: The tofu vendor was after we moved to Daikanyama. His shop was located on the other side of Komazawa boulevard. He's been coming for a long time.

佐知子：　じゃ、戦争でも材料がなくなるまでは来てたわけ。
Sach: So, he continued to come even during the war, until the ingredients were no longer available?

正子：　もうね、全部配給だからね。お豆腐なんか食べなかった。
Masako: Since everything was rationed, I didn't have any tofu.

佐知子：　あ、そう。配給って何があったの。何が入ってたの。配給で食べたもので。
Sach: Oh, I see. What was rationed? What food items were included in the ration?

正子：　配給？だから初めのうちは卵とかさ。お米もそうだったし。全部配給だったわね。で、卵なんかね、そんな一個なんてことないのよ。卵は全部割ってね、何か大きな入れ物に。そして人数によって、そう、オタマジャクシで。今から考えると黄身と白身とどうなって (笑) ？　かき混ぜてやってたのかしら。
Masako: Ration? Well, initially, there were eggs and rice. Everything was rationed. But it's not like a single egg [in its shell]. Eggs were all cracked open and poured into a large vat or something. And they were ladled out for each person [in the household]. Now that I think about it, I wonder about the egg whites and yolks [laughter]—they might have been all mixed up together.

正子：　だから肉なんて言うとね、人数によってね、すき焼きの肉が 1 枚、とかそういう感じよ。で、それを猫が狙って食べちゃったとか (笑) 。色々と大変だったわよ。 そのうちにお魚ももちろん配給になったんだけど、食べられるお魚なんか来なくなっちゃってね。「猫またぎ」とか言ってね、猫も食べないっていうお魚だったりして。それもこなくなったみたいよ。
Masako: And with meat, depending on the number in the household, it was like one slice of sukiyaki meat [very thin slices] per person. And a cat would have its eyes on it and snatch it away [laughter]. It was rough. Then eventually, fish also of course became rationed, but they wouldn't bring any fish that were edible. Those were called, "cat pass'em ups," meaning even the cats wouldn't eat it. But even those stopped coming.

佐知子：　じゃ、最後の頃お腹空いてたの、ママ。
Sach: So, were you hungry towards the end?

正子：　最後はね、終戦になって京都に行ったでしょ。だから東京はどうなってたか知らないけど。 でもその空襲で焼けちゃったりなんかしたら配給もへチマもないもん。結局ね。だからみんな大変 だったのよ。
Masako: In the last days, I went to Kyoto and then the war ended. So I don't know what it was like in Tokyo. But if the air raids burned down your house, rations were the least of your problems. In the end, it was rough for everybody.

佐知子：　なるほど。ご飯なんかも炊いたりするのは危険じゃ。
Sach: I see. Wasn't it dangerous to cook rice?

正子：　あ、ご飯なんかないもん。 お米なんか。
Masako: Oh no, there was no rice.

佐知子：　そうか。いつごろからなくなったの。
Sach: Oh right. When did [rice] disappear?

正子：　そんなのも今や覚えてないけど。だいたいなかったわよ。でね、例えば配給があった頃でもね、もうどれだけ頻繁にあったか覚えてないけど。お米だってせいぜい何合っていうぐらいしかなかったからね。それをいかにお腹いっぱい食べて、何日も伸ばすか、何日で食べられるかっていうのが問題で。だからみんなおかゆになっちゃうわけ。そしてそのお粥もごはんだけじゃ足りないからね。大根の葉っぱとかさ、何かおいもを入れるとかさ、ある野菜 をまぜてね。だけどダシなんかないからさ。ただ炊くだけよ。調味料だってそんなもう湯浅醤油とかそういうのはないからさ。お醤油も配給だからね。まあお塩とお醤油と。ちょっとしたおみそぐらいじゃない。お砂糖なんかすっかりないしね。そのうち食べられるところは野菜も全部なくなったのよ。
Masako: I don't remember any more. There just wasn't any. Even when it was rationed, I don't remember how often it was. I mean they only distributed a few cups worth. So the challenge was over how many days could it be stretched and fill the stomach. So they all made it into porridge. And since porridge alone wasn't enough, vegetables were added, like the leaves of daikon radish and some types of potatoes. Just plainly cooked. Soy sauce was the cheap kind and that was rationed. So it was just salt and soy sauce for flavoring. Maybe a little miso. Sugar was completely non-existent. Eventually, no edible parts of vegetables were available.

佐知子：　大根の葉っぱすら、ってこと。
Sach: You mean, even the leaves of daikon radish?

正子：　うん。だからサツマイモの茎とかさ。
Masako: Yes, so it'll be like only the roots of sweet potatoes.

佐知子：　ツル以外には。
Sach: What else, besides the roots?

正子：　あとはね、本当に覚えてない。ツルはあんまりひどいので覚えてるけど。
Masako: I don't remember the rest. I remember the roots because that was so awful.

正子：　だけどツルはね、やっぱり外回りは硬いからってそのツルをよくむかされたわよ。大変だったわよ。

Masako: The skin of the roots was tough, so the fibrous part had to be peeled away, which I had to do all the time. It was quite a work.

佐知子：　ママも手伝だったの。
Sach: You helped [peel them]?

正子：　うん、もちろん。で、手なんか真っ黒になったりするのよ。
Masako: Yes, of course. My hands turned completely black.

佐知子：　どうやって料理したの。
Sach: How were they prepared?

正子：　ゆでてお醤油かけるとかそれぐらいで。あとなかった、たぶんね。
Masako: Probably boiled and sprinkled with soy sauce. And nothing else.

正子：　戦争だからしょうがないのよ。それでも戦地に行ってる兵隊さんに感謝していい食べ物は全部そっちに回して勝っていただきましょうっていう。ベーシックなアイディアだからね。みんな文句も言わないでしょ。だけど親は大変だったと思うけどね。
Masako: But it's war, so it's *shouganai*. The basic idea was to send, with a sense of gratitude, all the good food to the frontline soldiers in the hope that they will win. Nobody complained. But I suppose it must've been tough for the parents.

It wasn't always like this. In earlier years, the family enjoyed some regional specialties received from afar. She recalled with fondness:

正子：　覚えてんのはねえ、タイの浜焼きっていうのはすっごいおいしかった。
Masako: What I remember was having "snapper grilled on the beach" which was <u>really</u> delicious.

佐知子：　なに、それ。
Sach: What's that?

正子：　おっきな鯛。あのね、それはね、瀬戸内海に面している広島とかああいうとこで採れたてを浜で焼いちゃうんだって。それでお腹の臓物出すでしょ。そこになにが詰まっていたと思う。
Masako: It's a huge snapper. They catch these in places like Hiroshima which face the Setonai inland sea [southeast coast of the mainland] and grill the freshly caught snappers right on the beach. The innards were scooped out. Guess what the empty cavity was stuffed with?

佐知子：　お米。
Sach: Rice?

正子：　ゆでたまご。そのゆで卵がおいしくて、それを食べられるのがすごい楽しみだったの。でもなかなか。それでワラにくるんで送ってくるのよ。

Masako: Hard-boiled eggs. Those hard-boiled eggs were so delicious, so I really looked forward to eating them. Seriously. They send them wrapped in straw.

佐知子：　宅急便なんてなかったからね。

Sach: No *takkyubin* [Japanese express courier like FedEx] back then.

正子：　そうよ。汽車だってゴトゴト。なにしろ東京から仙台に行くのだって、夜行だと寝台車で寝てたもん。いまなんて２時間よ。

Masako: Right. The trains would just chug along. I mean if you had to travel from Tokyo to Sendai, you had to take a sleeper at night. These days, that trip would take only 2 hours.

佐知子：　なるほどね。

Sach: I see.

And she joyfully recalled the obento (lunch) she'd bring to school.

正子：　おじいちゃまがウチにいて食べるときなんかたまにはすき焼きなんかはしたわね、冬は。

Masako: When grandpa was home for dinner, we had sukiyaki once in a while during the winter.

佐知子：　好きだったよね。

Sach: He liked it.

正子：　うん。それで幼稚園のお弁当なんていうと前の日のすき焼きかなんかご飯の上に乗っかっててておいしかったんだけど。
Masako: Yes. So, the obento [lunch] for kindergarten would have the leftover sukiyaki from the night before over rice, which was quite delicious.

佐知子：　それはすごいうらやましがられたんじゃない。
Sach: Others must've been envious.

正子：　だってみんな同じようなことだから。そういえば。だって毎日お弁当を持ってくんだもん。
Masako: The others also had similar obento, come to think of it. Because we brought obento every day.

佐知子：　なるほど。でもなに、お弁当箱ってどういうものだったの。
Sach: I see. What was the obento box like?

正子：　お弁当箱ってね、アルマイトの前のなんかアルミニウムみたいなのでできてるお弁当箱ってのはみんなおんなじのがあったのよ。それで包んでいく風呂敷の色が違うから自分のはわかってね。それで冬なんかね、学校にラジエーターがあったから。ラジエーターというかお湯が通って。あの頃のあの暖房よね。その上にみんなお弁当をのっけていたのよ。あっためて(笑)。で、風呂敷でわかったわけ。
Masako: We all had the same obento-box that was made with something that predated alumite that was something like aluminum. Each of us wrapped them in different colored *furoshiki* [wrapping cloth] so we could identify our own. And in the winter, the school had a radiator, and hot water ran through it. That was the heater back then. We all placed our obento on top of that. To warm them up [laughter]. And we knew which one was whose by the *furoshiki*.

佐知子：　すき焼きとか何が入ってたの。
Sach: In addition to sukiyaki, what was in it?

正子：　あのね、２段にしてノリがかかってね。それでちょっと卵焼きとか何か煮物とかそういうのが入っていたこともあるんじゃない。なんかよく覚えてないけどね。最後の頃は梅干しだけとかそういう感じだったけどね、おかずなんかないから。
Masako: Well, it was a double-decker with nori. I think sometimes there was a little *tamago-yaki* [sweet egg omelette] or a slow-cooked dish. I don't really remember exactly. Towards the end, it was only *umeboshi* [salt-dried plums] since there was nothing else available.

佐知子：　それは戦争時代。
Sach: During the war.

正子：　そうそう。
Masako: Yes, yes.

佐知子：　戦争が始まるまではそれなりに食生活が豊かだったわけ。
Sach: So until the war started, you enjoyed a good diet.

正子：　そりゃあそうよ。
Masako: Yes, of course.

佐知子：　でも戦争が始まった途端に悪くなったわけじゃないんでしょ。
Sach: But it didn’t suddenly deteriorate as soon as the war started.

正子：　だんだん、だんだんよ。だんだん物がなくなってきたのよ。
Masako: Little by little. Things started disappearing gradually.

Narrative

Civilians No More

As the US attacks on the mainland intensified, the norm became *gyokusai* (rough translation: die with honor). School curriculum transformed from teaching proper behavior for the girls to become good wives and daughters-in-laws to preparing them for land invasion by training them in *archery* and *naginata* to kill the enemies.

Students (not mom or her schoolmates) practicing naginata[34]

[34] This photo shows school girls practicing *naginata*, a spear-like weapon during the war. "母と戦争 その 2 薙刀."

Her younger brother, Ko, and his classmates were no longer studying to enter the Imperial University, but were "contributing to the war effort[35]."

正子：　中学。一中に行ってた頃だもん。でも一中の生徒は銀座にあった有楽座に行って風船作ってたのよ。

Masako: That was when he was in middle school, at *Icchu* [abbreviation of Daiichi Chuugakkou 第一中学校, the most selective middle school in Japan back then]. But the Icchu students went to Yurakuza theater in Ginza to make balloon [bombs].

佐知子：　あのオレゴンに落ちたやつね。

Sach: Oh, the one that was dropped on Oregon.[36]

正子：　うん、うん。それで銀座がさ、昼間空襲になったりなんかしてね。そういう危険性があったのよ.

Masako: Yes. Then Ginza had an air raid in the middle of the day. We always faced that kind of danger.

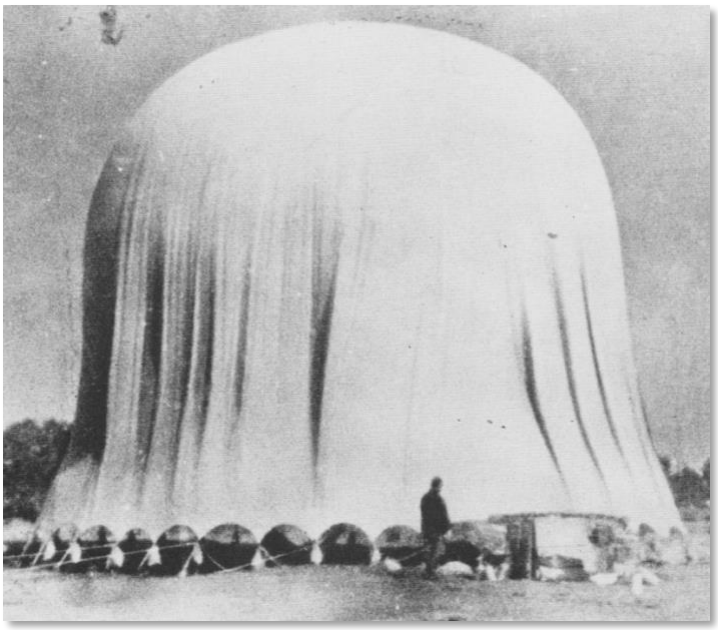


Photo: Balloon bomb. About 10,000 were sent to the United States on November 1944[37].

[35] Sending able-bodied men off to the frontline created a labor shortage, particularly in the defense industry. As a result, students were required to backfill this labor shortage starting August 1943. The following year, this policy expanded to include middle school students. 戦争と庶民, vol 3 p 54.

[36] On May 5, 1945, a pregnant woman and five children were killed when they discovered a balloon bomb that had landed in the forest of Gearhart Mountain in Southern Oregon. Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fu-Go_balloon_bomb

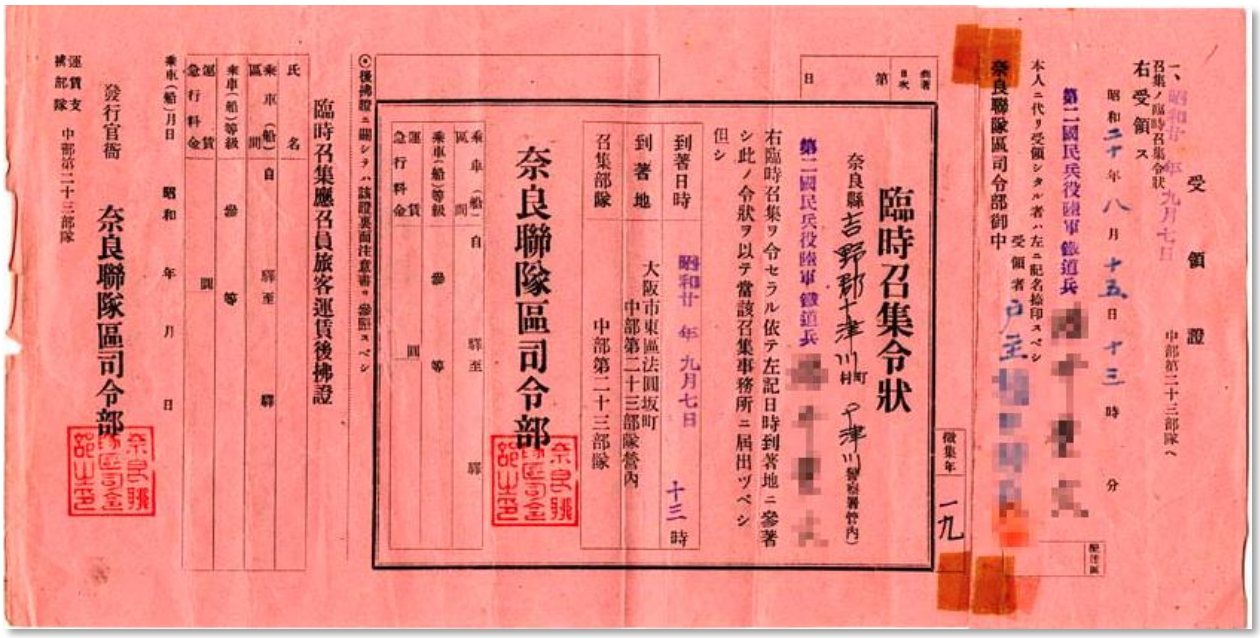
[37] About 10,000 balloon bombs were flown to the United States on November 1944. 戦争と庶民, vol. 3, p.112.

Mom saw an increasing number of women affected by the draft.

正子：　で、片っぽでは年頃の息子かなんかいれば赤紙っていったけどさ、召集令状っていうのが来るのよ。そうしたらもうとにかく一 週間以内に。
Masako: On the other hand, if you had a son of [conscription] age, you'd receive a draft notice, called *akagami* 赤紙[red paper]. If so, you'd only have one week.

佐知子：　一 週間!?
Sach: One week!?

正子：　そうよ。どっかのアレに行ってもそれは一生の別れかもしれない。まあ、お別れになっちゃうんでしょうけどね。もう大変な時代だったのよ。
Masako: Yes. Wherever the destination is, it may be the last time together. Well, they probably never saw each other again. It was an awful time.



Draft notice/*akagami* 赤紙[38]

正子：　うちはたまたま誰も行かなくて済んだけどさ。年頃がね、うまくいってるからね。
Masako: We just lucked out that nobody had to go in our family. Thanks to [the boys'] ages.

佐知子：　だけど千人針とかもしたわけ。

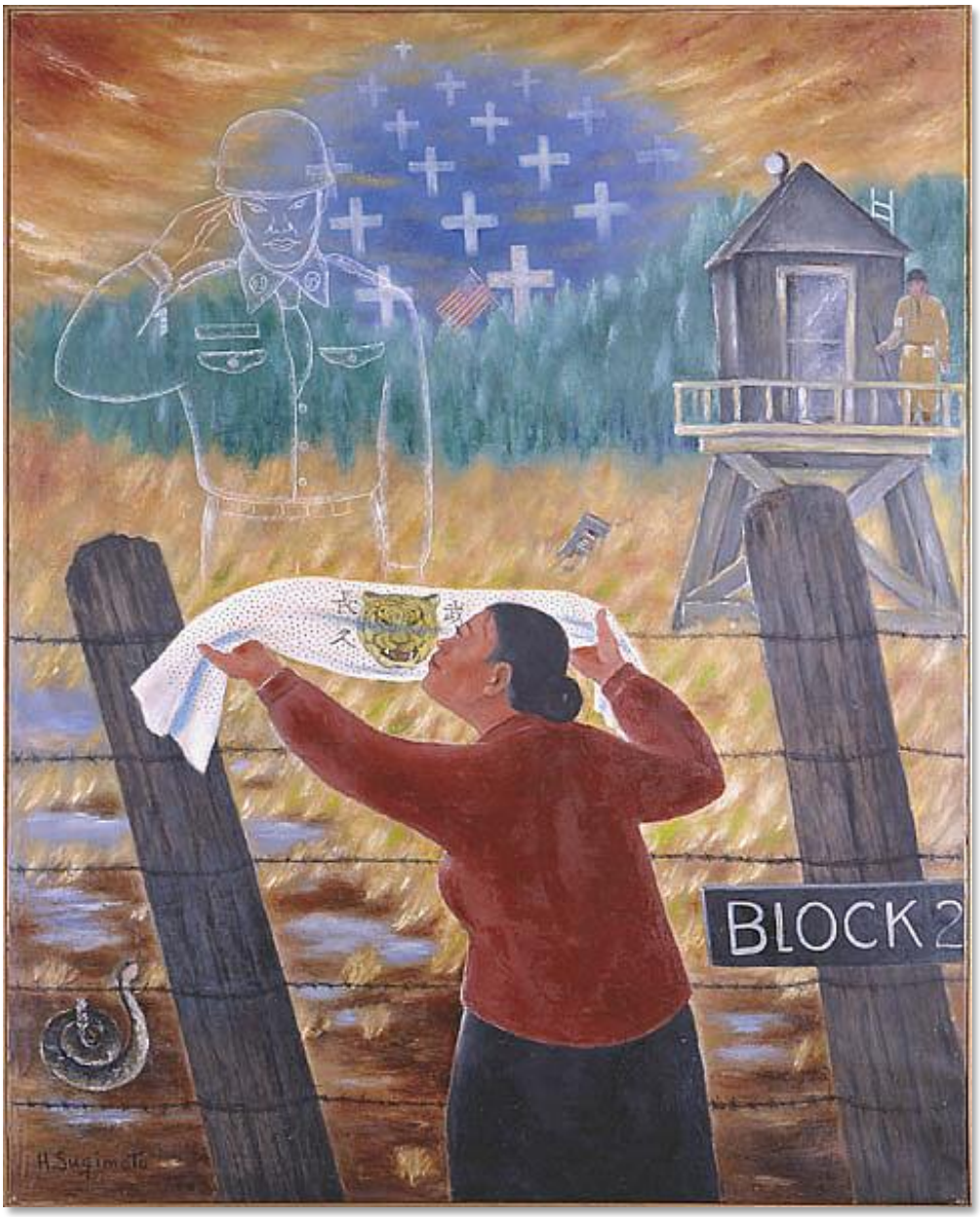
[38] "臨時召集令状（赤紙）表面｜奈良県立図書情報館."

Sach: But you still did *senninbari* [39]千人針 (thousand stitches)?

正子：　もちろんよ。電車降りたりなんかしたら、もう駅という駅には必ず立ってるもん。もうそれぐらいみんなが家族を送ってたわけ。だから千人針なんていうのはもう喜んでいっつも運針してたわよ、うん。その布だってだんだんなくなってくるんだからね。

Masako: Of course. When you get off the train, every single station always had them [women] standing there. Yes. Many people had to send off their families. So I was more than happy to make the stitches. Yes. But even the fabric for it became less available.

[39] *Sennin-bari* (*Sen*: a thousand; *nin*: person; *bari*: needles) a long piece of cotton cloth with stitching made by a thousand [women], each stitch made with prayer for safety. Mothers and wives made these for the departing boys/men in the hopes that this may protect them on the battlefield.



This is "*Senninnbari*," a painting by the Japanese American artist, Henry Sugimoto, who was incarcerated in Arkansas during the war. Women imprisoned in the American concentration camps also made *senninnbari* to send off the men in their families who volunteered to fight in the US segregated military units[40].

It is ironic how the Japanese women living in the two countries fighting one another shared the same sense of agony and made *senninbari*.

[40] "Henry Sugimoto, *Senninnbari*."

Increasingly desperate to find combatants, the military started soliciting “volunteers” even amongst students from the top universities who were previously exempted.

佐知子：　そう考えてみるとパパって相当ギリギリだったんじゃない、戦争に。
Sach: Come to think of it, didn’t dad come really close [to being sent to the warfront]?

正子：　だからパパは文化から理科に変わったのよ。
Masako: That’s why [your] dad [Wako] switched from the Humanities to Science.

佐知子：　もう人がいなくて文化だったらもう—。
Sach: They were running out of people, so had he stayed in the Humanities—.

正子：　文化だったらもうたちまちよ。だから法律なんていうのはダメだったのよ。
Masako: If you were in the Humanities, you were gone. That’s why Law was out of the question.

正子：　で、それで理系に移って。でもそれで卒業する頃にもう戦争は終わってたからまた法律に戻ったわけ。
Masako: Then he switched to Science, and by graduation the war had ended, so he went back to Law.

Mom hadn’t met dad at this point, but the threat that dad faced was very real to her.

正子：　光ちゃんもそうよ。もうみんな理科に変わったのよ。光ちゃんだって法科だもん。
Masako: Ko as well. Everybody switched to Science. Ko was also in Law.

正子：　だって神風特攻隊なんてやっぱり高校生か中学生か。
Masako: Because *kamikaze tokkotai* [voluntary suicide corps] were either high schoolers or middle schoolers.

佐知子：　だって光ちゃんなんてまだ 15、6。
Sach: But Ko was just 15 or 16.

正子：　5 にもなってなかったと思う。だって高校に行く準備の頃でしょう。
Masako: I don’t think he was even 15. He was still preparing to get into high school.

佐知子：　そんな若い子も。
Sach: Even kids that young—.

At 14, Ko faced a real threat of serving on a one-way mission as a pilot in kamikaze or human torpedoes in which boys were placed inside a tube and shot into the enemy ship/submarine.

Human torpedo/*kaiten* 回天[41]

[41] "*Kaiten*."

This new reality made the combat aspect of the war very personal to mom. Only a year apart, Ko and Masako were inseparable. Her memories, particularly those that she recalled fondly, often included his presence.

Ko (left) and Masako (right)

Fortunately, the war ended before Ko was "volunteered" into the frontline.[42]

[42] Over 3,700 young lives perished as *tokkotai* (volunteer suicide corps）戦争と庶民, vol 3 p.102.

Visual Dialogue

Co-Creating Home: Take Two

Although we struggled to recreate the image of the house, the connection between the house and the air raids became apparent.

佐知子：　この家って要するに瓦葺きの。
Sach: So, this house has Japanese style *kawara* roof tiles.

正子：　うん。もう本当の日本館。だからね、焼夷弾がおっこったのはね、2階もあるのにこの2階が全然ない茶の間に落ちたんだって。
Masako: Yes. Genuine Japanese style. So, the incendiary bomb didn't fall on the part of the house with the second floor, but it fell into the sitting room where there was no second floor above it.

佐知子：　あ、でも一応落ちたの。
Sach: Oh, but it did drop through.

正子：　うん。だから2階を突き破らなかったんでよかったっていう話だったのよ。ちょうど2階のないところは、ほんのちょっとのスペースなんだけどさ。 何か不発だったんだって。だからあれが本当にちゃんとしてたらば火事で焼けていただろうね。
Masako: Yes. So, we were lucky that it didn't rip through part of the house with the second floor. It was just this tiny little space that just happened to not have another floor above it. Plus, it was a dud. If it didn't malfunction, it would've blown up the house.

佐知子：　で、その茶の間の部分もそうだったからここに焼夷弾が落ちて。
Sach: Since the sitting room was like here, the incendiary bomb must have fallen right here [pointing to the area in the drawing that is indicated with an arrow].

正子：　そうだと思う。
Masako: I think so.

佐知子：　そうだったの。で、ここは2階だから。ワーオ。
Sach: Wow, so that's how it was. And this [adjacent] section has two floors.

正子：　だからすごく運が良かったのよ。
Masako: That's why we were really lucky.

Given the struggle in painting the house in its entirety, I decided to focus on the specific area where the bomb dropped. Here is the first attempt that captures the Japanese style *kawara* tile:

正子：　だからね、もうそのね、流れ出たね、ガソリンの掃除で大変だったって。
Masako: Apparently, cleaning up the gasoline that poured out was quite an ordeal.

佐知子：　え？何から流れ出たの？ その不発の—。
Sach: What? Where did that pour out of? The dud?

正子：　焼夷弾よ。
Masako: That incendiary bomb.

佐知子：　焼夷弾って。ああ、ガソリンが入っているんだ。
Sach: Incendiary bomb. Oh, it contains gasoline [napalm].

正子：　そうだって。大変だったんだって。でも何十年ぐらいでしょうね。あの玄関のところにその破片が全部を置いてあったわよ。
Masako: Supposedly. Apparently, it was quite a lot of work. But for some decades, all the remnants were left on the ground by the front door.

佐知子：　どうしてそんなのとってあったの。
Sach: Why would you keep something like that?

正子：　だって捨てるに捨てられないじゃない。
Masako: Because there was no place to dispose of it.

佐知子：　え、どうして。
Sach: What? Why?

正子：　縁起悪いとか何とかっていうより捨て場っていうのがなかったと思う。そんなゴミ屋は持ってかないしさ。
Masako: It's not so much that it's a bad omen but there just wasn't any place to dispose of it. That's not something that trash collectors would take.

Rather than be traumatized by its presence, mom told me that grandma Kikué used to show it off. She certainly had a unique way of looking at things.

佐知子：　ゴミなんてどうしてたの。
Sach: How was the trash handled?

正子：　ゴミ屋ってやっぱり回収に来てたんじゃない。
Masako: I suppose the trash collectors came around.

佐知子：　でもそういうのはちょっと変なもんだから持っていかないわけ。
Sach: But they don't pick up those things that are out of the ordinary?

正子：　うーん、やっぱり台所のゴミとか普通の。
Masako: Hmm. Usually just ordinary things like kitchen garbage.

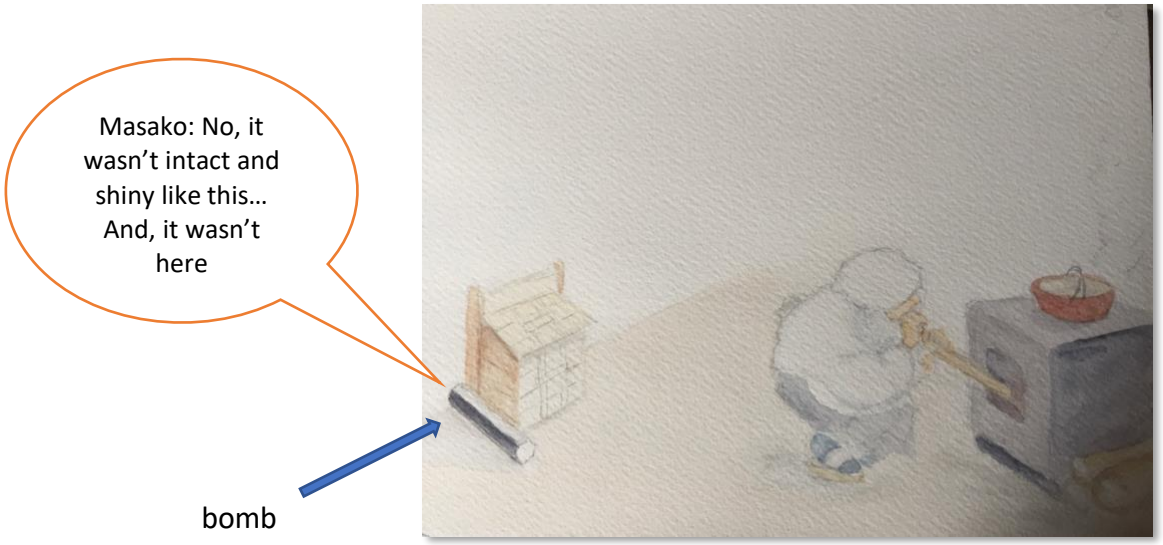
佐知子：　最終的にどうなったんだろうね。
Sach: I wonder what came of it at the end.

正子：　最終的にどこに捨てたんだか、おばあちゃま。ママが覚えている限りはあったけどね。あのアレの時に捨てたんだと思う、工事の時に。新しい部屋の時に。
Masako: I wonder where grandma ultimately disposed of it. As far as I could remember, it was there. Oh, I think it got removed during construction. When we built a new room.

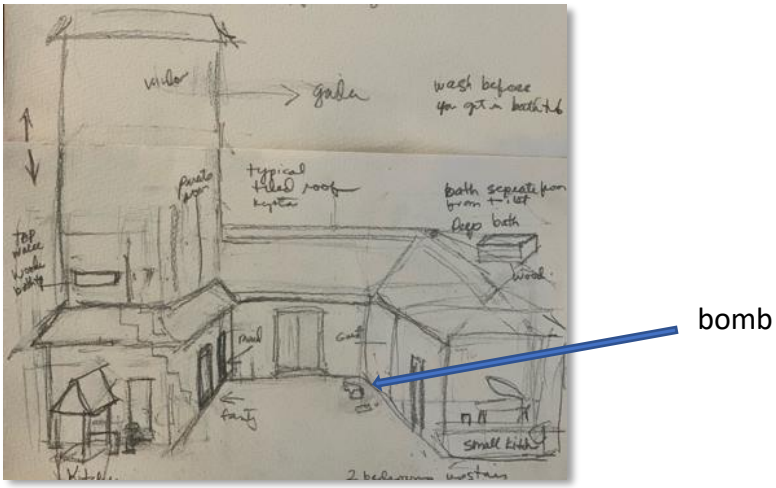
佐知子：　引き取ってくれるからね、そういう時。
Sach: Those are the times when they'll take those things away.

正子：　そう。それはそういうのは全部きれいにしてくれてさ、どっか特殊なところに持っていくんでしょうからね。
Masako: Yes. They clean up everything and probably bring them to some specially designated place.

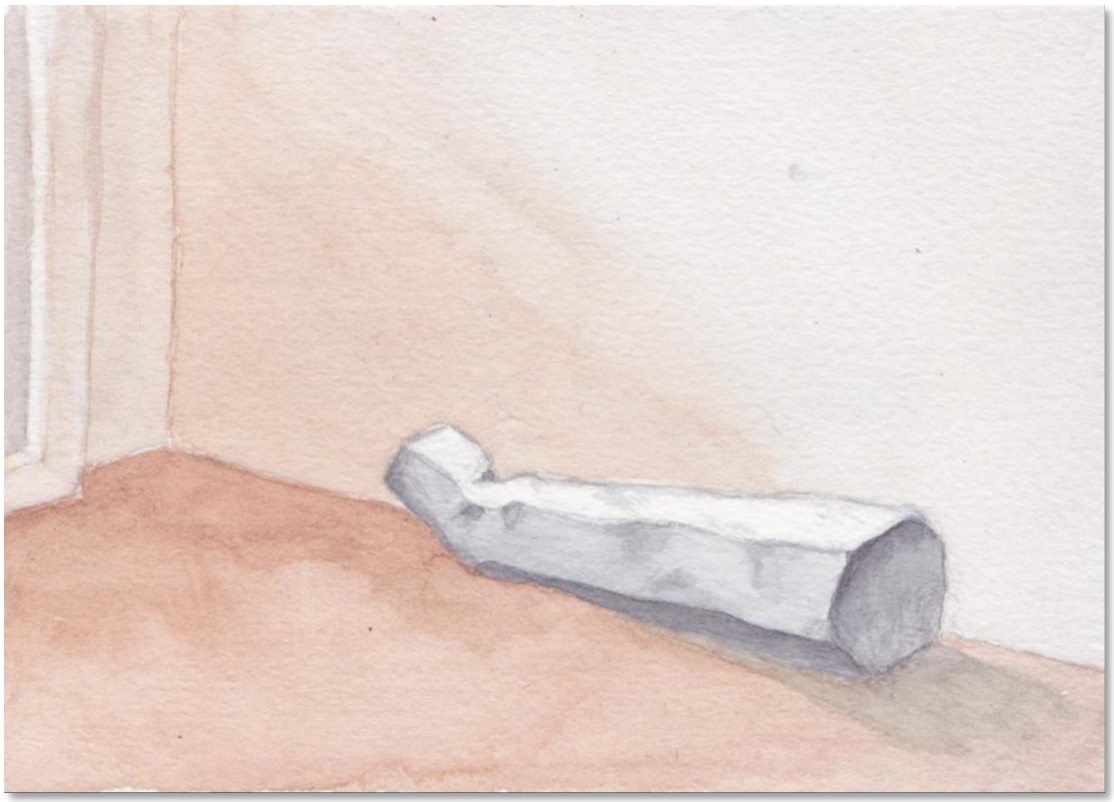
To create this image, I researched what the incendiary bombs that were dropped in Tokyo looked like. I assumed that the bomb must have been placed near the trash bin in the vicinity of one of the multiple entrances to the house. This was her reaction:



Mom indicated the location of the bomb in the sketch of the house that Jessica made.



Since the specifics of the front door and a lot of details about the house remained vague, I made the following painting. It was fascinating to collaborate with Jessica. Looking at the preliminary sketch, she asked whether the ground had a green lawn, standard in the front yard of most American homes. In Tokyo, lawns are a rarity. So, it must have been a patch of exposed earth.



Narrative

After the War

- Preparing Meals and Procuring Ingredients
- School

Preparing Meals and Procuring Ingredients

After the war ended, Masako, her mother and her siblings returned to Tokyo.

> 正子：　戦争中も大変だったけど戦後もすごい大変だった。だってもういろんなものはもう空襲で壊されてるから。水道とかガスとかも 24 時間出てるわけじゃないのよ。だから。毎日、地域によって決まってたのかな、時間が。その間に、水が出る間に、もうありとあらゆる入れ物に全部水をためるとね。それからガスも出てる間におかずを作るとか。いろいろ大変だったわよ、そうゆうこと。
>
> Masako: It was rough during the war but it was also really challenging after the war. I mean the air raids destroyed all kinds of things, so things like water and gas were not available 24 hours a day. There was a designated time, perhaps by region. During that time, when water was available, you filled all available containers with water. Also, you cooked while the gas was available. Dealing with those kinds of things was really tough.

> 佐知子：　そのおかずを作る—。
>
> Sach: When you say cooking—.

> 正子：　おかずたって大して何もなかったけどね。
>
> Masako: There wasn't much we could use to make a meal.

> 佐知子：　調味料も配給だったんでしょ。
>
> Sach: Condiments were also rationed?

> 正子：　戦後ね、もう配給もね、何かあんまり滞ってたんじゃないの。それでほら、闇市場ができたからさ。そこで調達したりとか。でもお金もないからね。ある日突如としてお金の価値が全部変わっちゃったからね。あれは大変だったと思うけどね。
>
> Masako: After the war, there was even a lag in getting the rations. Then the black markets popped up. That's how we procured stuff. But we had no money. All of a sudden, one day, the value of money completely changed. I think that was really devastating.

On February 16, 1946, the "Switch to New Yen" policy devalued currency and severely restricted access to savings[43].

> 正子：　でも新円切替なんて言ったら全部がアレだもんね。でもそんなことは子どもになんか教えてくれないし、こっちも興味ないしね。
>
> Masako: Well, the "Switch to New Yen" meant everything was basically gone. But that's not something that kids learn about and I wasn't too interested in it either.

[43] "新円切替."

正子：　だからみんな焼け残ったお家はもう先祖代々伝わってたものや何かを売り売り、売って生活して、とかね。それから家の一部を焼け出された人に貸したとかさ。もう今じゃ考えられないぐらいの生活だったけど、当たり前だったんじゃないの。

Masako: So those who didn't lose their homes survived by selling their heirlooms and valuables that had been in their families for many generations, or they rented out a part of the house to those who lost their homes to fire. It's hard to imagine, but back then, it was *atarimaé*.

正子：　そのうちにだから進駐軍が食べ物が不足してるからって言って色々と。本国から多く教会とかね、そういうオーガニゼーションを通じて来たのは配給になったけどね。

Masako: Eventually, the US Occupation Force took some actions to address the food shortage. Many churches and those types of organizations from the United States provided [food] and distributed those through rations.

佐知子：　それまではやっぱりお腹すいたとかいう思いはあったわけ。

Sach: So did you experience hunger up until that point?

正子：　だって配給だけでね暮らすのが役人としての義務だって。なんかね、裁判官の一人がね、配給だけで暮らしてお亡くなりになったのよ。栄養失調で。

Masako: Well, it was considered to be the obligation of government officials to make do with just the rations. But a judge who lived solely on rations died. From malnutrition.

正子：　だからもうみんなそれどころじゃなくて買い出しに行ったりとかね。それぞれみんなコネクションができてね。で、うちはおばあちゃまもケガして行かれないからママが行ったのよ。

Masako: People couldn't live like that, so we went on *kaidashi* 買い出し[procuring food]. Each person went through their personal network. For us, since grandma was wounded and unable to go, I went in her place.

正子：　それも近所の昔オペラ歌手で。有名なオペラ歌手だった平井先生っていう方が代官山の駅のすぐ近くにいらしてね。で、その先生がね、何かどういうわけか連れってくれて。平井先生の知り合いのお百姓っていうのがね、今だったらどういうふうに行ったんだかもう覚えてないんだけど。東横線の日吉で降りてね、一里ぐらい歩いて行ったとこにあったのね。

Masako: [Our contact was] a former opera singer who lived nearby. A very famous opera singer, [Minako] Hirai[44]-*sensei* lived right by Daikanyama station[45] And she took me along for some reason. The farmer she knew lived in—I can't even recall now how we

[44] "平井美奈子." Minako Hirai. Soprano. She also taught at many top music schools.

[45] Mom's parents' home was located within a two-minute walk from Daikanyama station.

even got there—was located about two-and-a-half-mile walk from the Hiyoshi station of the Toyoko line[46].

正子：　で、そこに行くのにはやっぱり着物かなんか持っていかなきゃいけないっていうんで。そういう時はやっぱりいい着物から持っていくからおばあちゃまの着物なんかずいぶん持ってった。

Masako: To go there, you had to bring some kimonos or something with you [to exchange for food]. We brought the good kimonos. I brought quite a bit of grandma's kimonos.

正子：　そうすると着くのがお昼ごろになっちゃうからね。何かそのお百姓さんがお昼ご飯はご馳走してくれたんだけどお米がおいしかったわよ、やっぱり。おかずはともかく畑でとれたナントカっという感じだったけどね。で、帰りにはお米を少しとそれから野菜、そのときの。だけど重かった。で、リュックサックを持ってってさ、それを帰りは担いだり手に持ったりして、また一里の道を日吉駅まで行って。それでもうすごい混んでる東横線に乗っかって帰って。それでもなんかみんなで今日は少しはまともなご飯が食べられるって言うんでね。何か楽しみだったけどね。

Masako: By the time we arrived, it was around lunchtime, and the farmer would feed us. The rice was delicious indeed. The meals were made from whatever they picked from the field. We'd take home a little bit of rice and some vegetables. They were heavy. I'd put some of them in a backpack, carry the rest and walk the two-and-a-half-mile road back to Hiyoshi station. Then we headed home on the jam-packed Toyoko line. Nonetheless, we

[46] Unlike in New York City in which letters and numbers designate each subway line, in Tokyo, each line has a name, like the Ginza line. Daikanyama station is the second stop after the major stop, Shibuya station, on the Toyoko line. Hiyoshi is 12 stops away from Daikanyama, about 8 miles in distance.

were able to eat somewhat of a normal meal on those days. So I kind of looked forward to it.

佐知子：　それは頻度としてはどれぐらい。
Sach: How often did you go?

正子：　あれどれぐらい行ったかな。やっぱり。どれぐらい行ったのかしら。行かれる時に先生が誘ってくださるときには必ず行ってたからね。覚えてないけど。でも等身大の椿姫か何かの先生の写真があるぐらいの、ソプラノ歌手の有名なソプラノ歌手だった方ですらそれだったのよ。彼女もだってお嬢さんとぼっちゃんがいてご主人がいらっしゃるから食べなきゃならないじゃない。
Masako: Hmmm, let me think. How often was that? I always went whenever *sensei* invited me. I don't quite remember. But even a famous soprano who had a life-size portrait of her as Violetta Valéry [heroine in La Traviata] had to do that. She had a daughter and a son as well as her husband, so they had to eat too.

佐知子：　その椿姫をなさったグラマラスな方が。
Sach: Even a glamorous person who performed as Violetta.

正子：　あまりグラマラスかどうかは知らないけど(笑)。
Masako: Not sure if she was all that glamorous [laughs].

佐知子：　でもあんまりグラマラスじゃない姿でいたわけでしょ。結局はあんまりグラマーなんか関係ないよね。
Sach: But she probably couldn't be that glamorous. There really wasn't any time or place for glamor.

正子：　もう関係ないのよ。ともかく家がね、焼け残ってそういうお百姓を知っているってだけでね。
Masako: Not at all. It's just that their home was spared and she happened to know the farmer.

佐知子：　そういう時ってモンペかなんかで行ったわけ。
Sach: When you went there, did you wear monpé?

正子：　それはね、戦後だったからね、もんぺじゃなくて普通の洋服で行った。
Masako: Since it was after the war, not monpé but regular western clothes.

正子：　焼け残ったなにかで。
Masako: I wore whatever didn't get ruined.

佐知子：　だって靴なんて。紙靴を履いてる人もいた。
Sach: And shoes. You mentioned that people wore paper shoes.

正子：　もういた。もう靴なんか穴が空いたりなんかいろいろと(笑)。でも靴直しのおじさんというのもいたからね、近所に。
Masako: Oh yes. Our shoes had holes and stuff [laughs]. But there was a cobbler in the neighborhood.

佐知子：　何とかなったの。
Sach: So, you could deal with it.

正子：　うん。直してもらい、直してもらいして行ったんじゃない。新しいものなんか何にもなかったわ。やっぱり。
Masako: Yes. You repair, then repair again. Nothing new was available. At all.

正子：　それでもね、やっぱり買い出しでそういう風にもらってきたり、交換してもらってきたりするのをだんだん取り締まりするようになってね。駅やなんかでさ、取り締まりのポリスや何かがいるところもあってね。せっかくもらってきたのを取り上げられた人とかいうのも随分いたみたいよ。
Masako: But eventually, they started to crack down on things that were procured from *kaidashi* and bartering. There were policemen at train stations who cracked down on that sort of thing. It seemed many had their hard-won possessions confiscated.

佐知子：　ママそういう目にあったの。
Sach: Did that happen to you?

正子：　代官山なんて田舎の駅みたいだったからね、そのとき。でも大きい駅なんかではすぐわかるんじゃない、やっぱり。
Masako: Daikanyama was kind of a provincial station back then. But you were probably scrutinized at the larger stations.

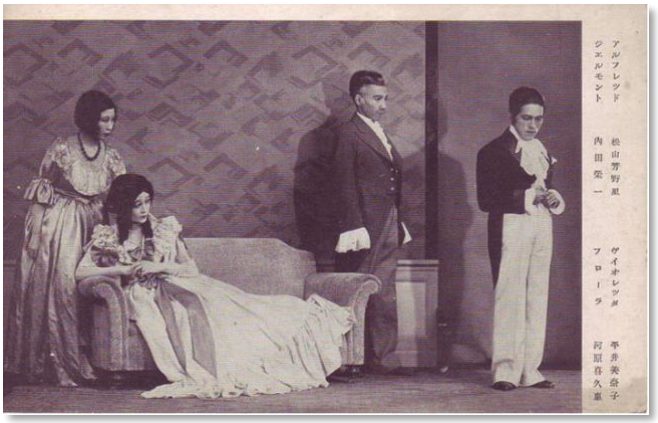
佐知子：　その当時のおっきい駅っていったらどこになるわけ。
Sach: What stations were considered large back then?

正子：　やっぱりさ、渋谷。
Masako: Obviously, Shibuya[47].

佐知子：　渋谷のいっぽ前だから助かったわけね。
Sach: It helped that [Daikanyama] was one station before Shibuya.

[47] Shibuya is where multiple subway and train lines traverse and the town became iconic with its crowded crossing that was featured in films like “Lost in Translation.”

Hirai-*sensei* at the farmer's



Hirai-*sensei* as Violetta in the 1933 production of La Traviata[48]

[48] "Wikimedia Snapshot."

School

Upon returning to Tokyo, mom went back to school. Her school re-enrolled students who had missed part of their education due to their early graduation.

正子：　ママがちょうど終戦の時に卒業したのよ。もうとにかくどんどんどんどん人手がいるということでね、勤労奉仕でね、工場なんかで。それでその年だけ 4 年生と 5 年生が一緒に卒業したの。それでね、卒業式が 3 月の何日かでその 2 週間ぐらい後に学校が全部焼けたの。

Masako: I graduated in the same year when the war ended. [From the year prior] there was an increasing need for labor, like volunteer work, at factories. So only that particular year, the fourth year and fifth year students graduated together. And graduation was sometime that March and about two weeks later, the entire school burned down.

正子：　それでみんななんとなく疎開したり、散り散りになってね。それでもうその年の夏に終戦だったでしょ。だから京都で終戦。で、学校に行ってなかったらば、京都なんかは工場なんかないからね。どっかの工場にやられるっていうので学校に行かされたのよ。なんとかってね、宗教の学校。仏教の。

Masako: So, everybody sort of scattered, some leaving the city. Then that summer, the war ended. That's why I was in Kyoto at the end of the war. There, I had to attend school, because Kyoto doesn't have any factories, so [my parents] enrolled me in a school to avoid being sent away to work in some factory. It was a religious school, Buddhism, called something.

佐知子：　何を習ったの。

Sach: What did you study?

正子：　その学校に新しく看護婦か何かの養成所みたいな感じだったらしいんだけど、ろくに勉強もしないうちに終戦になったわけよ。ちょっと素敵な人と友達にはなったんだけどね(笑)。それでもう終戦になったから、もうやめちゃってね。それでまた東京に戻ったのかな。 また高等科に行ったんだけどさ。

Masako: It was some kind of new program for nurses but before I started studying anything substantial, the war ended. Although I did become friends with a classy person [laughs]. Then the war ended so I quit. And I suppose I returned to Tokyo. And re-enrolled in school. That's right. And there, I did apply myself to studying.

佐知子：　だから卒業したものの一応学校に戻ったわけね。

Sach: That's how you returned to school even though you had already graduated.

正子：　学習院に戻ったの。

Masako: I returned to Gakushuin[49].

佐知子：　それで 1 年？
Sach: You attended for a year there?

正子：　2 年。だけどね。1 年目はね。なにしろ学校が全部 焼けちゃったからさ。学校がないわけでしょ。それでね、高等科に行った人数が少ないからね。で、もうひと組は何人いたかな。あんまりたくさんいないからね。20 人かそこらかしら。もうちょっとかな。
Masako: Two years[50]. But in the first year, since the school burnt down, there was no school building. And there were only a few who attended. I wonder how many in a single class. Not that many, maybe twenty or so. Perhaps more.

正子：　その頃の徳川侯爵ってさ、八代目将軍の子孫の徳川さんのお宅が焼けないで目白で残ってたんでね。そこにお座敷がふたっつあってさ。そこで 高等の 1 年目の授業があってそこへ通ってね。面白かったんだけど。広いお座敷だったからね。そこを使わせていただいて。校舎がないから、お座敷に座ってやったわけよ。
Masako: That time, Marquis Tokugawa—the descendent of the eighth Shogun—that estate in Mejiro remained intact. There were two *ozashiki* [large tatami rooms], where the classes were held for the fourth-year students, so that's where I went. It was fun. Those were huge *ozashiki*[51], which they allowed us to use. Since there were no school buildings, we sat in that *ozashiki*.

佐知子：　「お座敷に座って」って要するに正座してやるわけ。お座布団も。
Sach: Sitting in *ozashiki* means you sat properly with your legs folded? On an *ozabuton*?[52]

正子：　もちろん。お座布団なんかないわよ。畳の上にいきなりよ。座布団なんていうのはね、お客さまとかさ、年上の、目上の方が座るものであって学生なんか座布団なんか。
Masako: Of course. But there were no *ozabuton* [for us]. You sit right on the *tatami*. Zabuton is only for guests and people older than you, so not for students.

佐知子：　足しびれなかったの。
Sach: Didn't your legs go numb?

正子：　だってそれはもうみんな鍛えられてるからね。自分の家でご飯食べるときだって大概のうちはお茶の間に座って食べていたのよ。

[49] Gakushuin is the name of her exclusive private school.
[50] The school offered those students who graduated early an opportunity to make up the full two years of the regular curriculum.
[51] In Japanese, the plural form of the noun is indicated by the number or adjective preceding the noun, so the word itself does not change its form like in English in which "-s" is added. So here, I left the Japanese term as is.
[52] Sitting with legs completely folded is painful, cutting off the circulation in a matter of minutes. So to ease the pressure, one sits on a square cushion, *ozabuton*, literally written futon for sitting.

Masako: Oh, we were trained. Most families would sit on the tatami mats in the *ochanoma* [53] to eat meals at their homes.

佐知子：　ママも。
Sach: You too?

正子：　もちろんよ。だってテーブルと椅子なんかないもん。
Masako: Of course. We didn't have tables and chairs.

佐知子：　だって洋間があったっていうから。
Sach: You said you had a western style room.

正子：　洋間はね、お客さま用なのよ。だいたいどこのうちでもね、洋間っていうのはあるんだけど洋間はお客様用で。普段生活してる部分は寝室からお茶の間から居間から全部お座敷。
Masako: The western style room was reserved for guests. In general, most homes had a western style room but that's used for guests and everyday activities ranging from bedrooms to *ochanoma* to living rooms were all Japanese-style *tatami* rooms.

佐知子：　目白までどうやって通ったの。
Sach: How did you get to Mejiro?

[53] *Ochanoma*: a sitting room, literally written "a place for tea."

正子：　もうぶら下がるようにして山手線(笑)。東横線と山手線。

Masako: On the Yamanote line, practically dangling as I held on [laughter]. Toyoko line and Yamanote line.

佐知子：　とおってたわけ。

Sach: [Yamanote line] was still running?

正子：　もちろんよ。だけどもう台数も少ないしさ。もうものすごく満員で東横線なんてね、ドアも閉まらないうちに代官山で乗るから一番外側じゃない。そしてね、高架線になるの。最後の渋谷駅に行くそこをちょうど曲がるとね、電車が傾いて落ちそうになって大変だったわよ。「落ちる、落ちる」とか喚いたり(笑)。

Masako: Of course. But there were fewer trains running. And they were packed. On the Toyoko line, they leave Daikanyama before the doors closed. I'm on the edge. Then it goes through an elevated section and at the final stretch near Shibuya station where it curves, the train tilts and I'd almost fall out. It was terrible. I would shout, "I'll fall, I'll fall! [laughs]"

佐知子：　落ちた人いたの。

Sach: Did anybody fall?

正子：　落ちた人はいない。みんなはもう、そう助け合い(笑)、支えてくれたりなんかして。でももう閉まらないんだもん。
Masako: Nobody fell. Everybody helped each other [laughs], holding [me] up. But the [doors] didn't close.

佐知子：　閉まらないのに出ちゃうの。
Sach: Leaves [the station] without closing?

正子：　だって。とにかく電車はその、なんていうの、タイムテーブル通りに行かなきゃならないでしょ。そんなの閉まるまで駅員もそんなにいないからさ。閉まらないうちに「発車します」なんて言って出ちゃうわけよ。
Masako: Well. The trains, you know, have to stick to the schedule. It's not like there are that many station staff, so they'd announce "departing" and the train would start moving before they closed the doors.

佐知子：　じゃ、もうドアからはみ出るような感じでやってたの。
Sach: So you were hanging on for dear life on a moving train with the doors open?

正子：　うん、そうよ。すごい怖かったわよ。でもなんかね、捕まるところがあったかなんかでみんなが落ちると大変だって感じでぎゅうぎゅう詰め込んでくれたんだけど (笑)。冬なんかはコート着るから大変だったけどね。それで渋谷で乗り換えて山手線。今の。今の山手線省線[54]って言ったのだけどそれで目白まで行ったわけ。
Masako: Yes, that's right. It was really scary. But I think there was something to hold onto, I suppose. And nobody wanted anyone to fall, so they all jammed in [laughs]. Winter times were challenging because we're wearing coats. So at Shibuya, I transferred to the Yamanote line. It was called the Shousen line then, and I took that to Mejiro.

佐知子：　そこもこぼれそうになって行ったわけ。
Sach: You almost fell over that one as well?

正子：　省線の方はこぼれそうでもないんだけど。東横線がすごかった。だってみじかいもん。
Masako: Not on the Shousen line but the Toyoko line was intense. It's a shorter train [thus limited capacity].

正子：　あとの下の方のクラスは護国寺って池袋にあるお寺を使ったらしいけどそっちは行ったことないから知らないけど。徳川さんはおうちだからよかったわよ。

[54] Yamanote line was briefly called *Shousen* during this period. 山手線のことを「しょうせん」と呼んでいた

Masako: For the lower grades, classes were held in a temple in Ikebukuro called Gokokuji. I had never been there so I don't know what it was like. I was lucky that the Tokugawa's was a home.

正子：　それでね、1年経ってそのあいだにね、とにかく学校をなんとかしなきゃって思ったんでしょうね。それでね、高田馬場になんか軍隊のナントカ連隊って軍隊の土地があってさ、建物があるじゃない。で、そこに行くことになってね。だけども扉はないし、窓はしまんないし、とにかくもうノミはいるし。(笑) 大変だったわよ、そりゃ。体操場なんていったって馬小屋かなんかだったんじゃない。だからね、もうお天気がよければね、授業も外でしたほうがよかったの。お日様が当たるから。だから外でもって哲学とかなんとか勉強したのよ(笑)。

Masako: During that year, the school realized that they had to address the situation. So there was a building on the military grounds for some troops in Takadanobaba, so we were sent there. But there were no doors and windows wouldn't close. There were fleas. [Laughs] it was awful. I think the gymnasium was a horse stable. So whenever the weather was good, the classes were held outdoors. We got some sun then. So I studied philosophy and stuff outside [laughs].

佐知子：　ノミなんてどうやって対応したの。

Sach: How did you deal with fleas?

正子：　だってその頃はノミだのシラミだの、みんないて当たり前だったのよ。それでもう靴だってもうみんな戦争中で新しいの買えないからさ、みんな擦り切れちゃって。そしたらこの紙の靴とかいうのができてね。紙の靴なんか手に入れて履いてきた人もいるし。

Masako: At that time, fleas and lice were *atarimaé* [a given]. Even shoes. During the war, you couldn't buy new pairs, and all of them were worn out, so paper shoes were introduced. I remember people who wore those.

佐知子：　ママはどうしたの。

Sach: What did you do?

正子：　まあ紙の靴まではははかなかったけど(笑)。

Masako: Well, I didn't reach the point of wearing paper shoes [laughs].

No longer having to learn archery and naginata, the students studied subjects such as ethics and tea ceremony to prepare them for marriage. Graduates from mom's school were typically matched by go-betweens to suitors from similar backgrounds.

The following section is a script of an audio piece that illustrates how this worked for mom's parents. It takes some of the interview excerpts which appeared earlier in this document and transforms it into this story.

Short Story

The Marriage of Zentaro and Kikué

I've never seen Zentaro and Kikué hug or kiss each other or heard them say "I love you"
Which, for somebody like me, who grew up in the States, seemed, well, different
But I got some insight into their relationship from this story that mom told me

Zentaro and Kikué got married, not because they fell in love but
Back in 1927, marriages were arranged between two families
It was a merger of status and assets
Zentaro offered a solid future in the government while
His fiancé's family had social status, with her father's prestigious position at the Bank of Japan
But during their engagement, the situation changed as
his fiancé—Kikué—no longer could hold up her end of the bargain
Her father suffered a cerebral hemorrhage, ending his career at the bank
So their go-between told Zentaro:
"You should call off the engagement"
Most men would have
After all, an arranged marriage was a contract. Not a vow "for richer or poorer"

Zentaro responded to the go-between:
"It's not the 'old man that I'm marrying, so I don't care"
And that's how my grandparents came together

Fast forward 18 years to 1945
Japan and the United States are fighting each other in WWII
Zentaro and Kikué lived in Kyoto where he's the governor
Their daughter—my mom—stayed behind in Tokyo, to finish high school
Today, Kikué is visiting her

<sound of the train moving on the tracks>
Kikué's train was coming out of the tunnel
<sound of the train coming out>
Suddenly:
<sound of airplane attack; people screaming>
An American airplane flew over and rained bullets on the train
A bullet pierced through her left shoulder

> おばあちゃまが乗ったところだけが半分ぐらい死んだみたいよ
> Half of the passengers in her car died
> もう血の海だったって
> It was a sea of blood

When the medics came

> 重症の人はとにかく手を切るとか足を切るとかすごかったらしいよ
> It was mayhem, as they were amputating arms and legs of the seriously injured

軽傷だったんだって
だからちょちょっと手当てしてもらってね
で、もう「帰ってよろしいって」
They said her injury was minor
So, they simply applied a quick patch and told her to leave

Kikué came home, covered in blood

そこから病院に救急車を呼ぶなんてことはできないわけよ
救急車なんか走ってないからさ
自分で病院に行かなきゃならないわけ
But It's not like we could call an ambulance
There were none
So she had to go to the hospital on her own

So Kikué headed to the small clinic of their friend, Dr. Kanai
She both walked and took whatever was left of the partially destroyed Ginza subway line, for 8 miles, which is the distance between the southern tip of Manhattan and 125th St. in Harlem

Hearing the news, Zentaro arranged for her to be seen at the best hospital in Kyoto
He personally came to bring her back
Unusual. Men often did not take time off to attend family emergencies

その晩に金井さんが焼けたのよ
病院が
So, she checked out of the clinic and that night, it burned down
The clinic

At the Kyoto University hospital. Kikué underwent several operations:

レントゲンか何かで見たらもうほとんど心臓スレスレだったってよ
X-rays showed that the bullet barely missed her heart

It was hardly a minor injury

A year later, the US Occupation purged Zentaro from his job
He wasn't allowed to take another job during the 7 years of the Occupation
Now he's the one who lost socio-economic status
Well, they never exchanged a marriage vow, "for richer or poorer"
But Kikué stuck it out

They certainly had each other's backs, literally "in sickness or in health"
And the marriage lasted 57 years till death did them part

Photo: Wedding of Zentaro and Kikué. Source: courtesy of Uncle Takashi Kobayashi.

Seeing this photograph of my grandparents' marriage inspired mom to share the anecdote on how grandpa honored his commitment to marry her. I appreciated how that spoke to his character.

Mom was impressed that I transformed her memories into this story. Then on the line, "But Kikué stuck it out," she said, "it's not like she had any choice."

The following section features another short story featuring Zentaro as a high schooler. Until I engaged in an oral history interview with mom, I knew nothing about the specifics in the story.

Short Story

The Standoff

Kiyomi is MAD. He glares at his classmate, Zentaro, who defiantly glares back from the other side of the newly built tennis court at their high school. Even the crisp morning air can't temper Kiyomi's anger. Zentaro and his friends, clad in athletic-style pleated kimono, look like a gang of samurais ready for a sword fight. But this is 1915. They have no swords. Japan banned swords and samurais when it ended its feudal system 44 years prior.

Zentaro stands authoritatively, his stout legs firmly anchored and puffing the sturdy chest of his stocky body. With a crew cut, smallish squinty eyes, big round cheeks and thick lips, his face is what some artists might find interesting. In contrast, Kiyomi is slender with an almost leading man's looks. He and his friends look sharp in their black school uniforms that mimic naval officer suits with mandarin collars and gold buttons.

Their names reflect the values and traits that their respective parents wanted their sons to embody. Kiyomi's father, a former poet, selected kanji[55] characters 清(kiyo) 見(mi), meaning "pure vision" to complete the family name, Takayasu 高安, which means "high peace." Zentaro's merchant family was more practical, using 太郎(taro) meaning "boy" and added "zen" 善, meaning "Good." He lives up to his name. Sweet and thoughtful, he respected his parents' wishes for him to move into the home of the principal of the Sano Middle School at 12. There, the principal cultivated him to be an ardent patriot and a protector of Japanese tradition.

Unlike Zentaro, Kiyomi grew up in a glamorous and liberal family. Popular actors begged to star in the works of his father, a playwright. Fluent in English, his father also translated into Japanese, Henrik Ibsen's *A Doll's House*, in 1901, inspiring suffragettes with whom he collaborated.

The two personify the polarization of how citizens reacted to the rapid transformation of Japan. After centuries of walling itself from the entire world, Japan opened up to the rest of the world in 1868. Aspiring to join the ranks of the leading colonial powers, it rushed to emulate visible features of Western fashion, art, music, and architecture, but below the surface, pit latrines were still the standard. City dwellers like Kiyomi sought the latest, but many in the rest of Japan, like Zentaro from Ashikaga, which is 50 miles northwest of Tokyo, still longed to retain and perhaps even return to the feudal past.

[55] Kanji: a set of written characters adapted from classic Chinese language. Typical Japanese use about 2,000 kanjis and exceptionally educated ones might know up to 5,000.

Eager to introduce the coolest imports from the West, Kiyomi lobbied the school to start a tennis club. In 1915, tennis was still new in Japan. Even when Kiyomi's son, Wako, 和光 ("harmonious light") attended UC Berkeley in 1952, tennis was still a novelty. Consistent with the Takayasu family spirit, he was quick to embrace the latest trend. Wako immediately procured an entire outfit and attracted a crowd when he played a match the next day. Eventually, one of the spectators came up to him to let him know that he ought to wear a pair of shorts and not boxer underwear. As western as they tried to be, underneath, they still wore loincloths.

Zentaro, ever the guardian of tradition, resisted bringing Western influence into his world, including a new tennis court. He would soon learn that the control he exerted within the dormitory as a proctor will not extend to the rest of the campus.

Looking forward to playing on the newly built tennis court, Kiyomi and his friends instead confronted Zentaro and his pack. Staring down at each other, he noticed a slight smirk on Zentaro's thick lips. Then he grimaced at the waft of stench. Zentaro and his pack had worked overnight to cover the beautiful green tennis court with a lumpy, drippy, brown mass of manure. Zentaro was not such a "good boy" after all.

Kiyomi was livid. He swore that his family will never ever affiliate with Zentaro's. Well, a year after Kiyomi's son, Wako, returned from Berkeley, he married Zentaro's daughter, Masako. By then, both Kiyomi and Zentaro had mellowed, having experienced many challenges during and after the war.

Through their children's union, Kiyomi and Zentaro both discovered many mutual joys and memories, doted on the shared granddaughter, Sach, and became BFF.

Grandpa Kiyomi (right) with Sach (left)

Narrative

The Long Shadows of the War

- Horrors of the War
- Closure

Horrors of the War

Zentaro mellowed after the war, partly because he realized the devastating nature of the war. For some time, the US GHQ [General Headquarters] and the Japanese government suppressed news that revealed the impact of the atomic bomb, particularly what the *hibakusha* (survivors of the atomic bomb) experienced. As the news trickled in over time, Zentaro found out what happened to his long-time colleague at the Department of the Interior, Mr. Senkichi Awaya and his family. Back then, government positions were assigned, and not something that was determined through election. Awaya-san was assigned to Hiroshima as its mayor in July 1943[56]. He only moved his family from Tokyo to Hiroshima after the Tokyo Air Raid in 1945, thinking that Hiroshima would be safer. The atomic bomb instantly killed Awaya-san, his son Shinobu and granddaughter, Ayako. His wife survived the direct hit but ultimately died from radiation. His daughter who traveled to Hiroshima to look after her also died later from the radiation.

Learning of their fate drove home the horrors of the war to Zentaro. As a result, he became a lifelong pacifist.

[56] "Senkichi Awaya."

Closure

Later in his life, Zentaro had an opportunity to fulfill his lifelong yearning.

正子：　おじいちゃま、すっごくそのお兄さんが好きでね。いつもそのお兄さんが生きてたら、生きてたらって言って。亡くなったところに行ってみたいっていうのは一生の願いだったのよ。 それが第二次世界大戦が終わって行き来ができるようになってからね。なんかやっぱりお役所の関係の旅行があって、そこに行くっていうのがあって。どうしても行きたいって言うんでね、おばあちゃまがついて一緒に行ったのよ。

Masako: Grandpa <u>really</u> liked that brother [the one who died in China]. He's always lamented, "had he been alive; if he were still here." So going to the place where he perished had been his lifelong yearning. After World War II ended and traveling became possible, he had an opportunity to join a tour that was organized by the government. He insisted that he really wanted to go, so grandma accompanied him.

正子：　その時もうちょっと弱ってたんだけどね。だからその愛育会ではすごい心配して行かないように言ってください、なんて言って悦子おばちゃまが行ったときにそう頼まれたからとか言って電話がかかってきたのよ。ママが出たからママから止めてくれって電話がかかってきたんだけどママは嫌だって言ったの。あんなに長い、何十年もの間思い続けて行きたい、行きたいってやっと行くチャンスがあって、もうすごい喜んでるのに行くのやめなさいと は言えないしね。たとえ何かあって病気になったり何かしてもね、本人はやっぱりそれは本望だったから後悔ないと思うからね。これは止めないって言った。

Masako: At that point, he was already rather fragile. So [his staff at] Aiikukai[57] [where he worked] was really worried and pleaded with him not to go. They even asked Ko's wife to intervene, so she called me. I picked up the phone and she asked that I stop him, but I said, No. He's been longing for decades, "I want to go, I want to go," and was so thrilled to finally have the opportunity to go, so I can't tell him not to. Even if something happened and he became sick or something, that was what he really wanted to do, so he wouldn't have regretted it. So I said, I won't stop him.

[57] When he was 82, he became the chairman of Aiikukai, a charitable organization.

Reflection on Radical Empathy

Mom's recollections of her father provided a fuller picture of my grandfathers, Zentaro and Kiyomi. Having lived away from Japan for most of my life, I had relatively limited interaction with them. They were always kind and sweet to me.

The process of creating this thesis and the short stories made me more deeply connected with all of them—mom, grandpa Zentaro and grandpa Kiyomi—in ways that went beyond simply audit-editing the interview transcripts. I now better understand who they were, what they went through, and the surprising fact that they were not only classmates but archenemies in high school.

And, I enjoyed the feeling of almost having been a fly on the wall (or the tennis court, but not the manure).

Visual Dialogue

Photographs

The photographs featured in this thesis were digitized by our family friend and artist, Professor Dennis French.

A few precious photos have been provided by mom's little sister and her husband, Kazuko and Takashi Kobayashi. Many others collected dust in boxes, envelopes and albums and have been unseen since mom and dad moved to Bloomington in1986. Their busy schedule spared no time to look at them. The pandemic dramatically reduced mom's social engagements and this oral history project gave us the time and reason to look at the photographs.

Digitizing the photos and projecting the images onto her large, 65-inch TV screen made it possible for all of us to see and talk about the images together. In this picture, mom is enjoying a trip down memory lane. By enlarging the image, she was able to identify each person.

Photo: mom and Dennis looking at the group photo projected on TV

Dennis commented on how mom looked the happiest in the group. Indeed, she is the one with a hearty laugh in the center-right in the back row.

Epilogue

This oral history project uncovered many stories that were long buried, but still etched in mom's memory. It also helped me understand the context of the stories I had heard before, about her anxiety over the survival of her family.

Conducting the research concretized previously abstract concepts, particularly the air raids. I learned the historic magnitude of the Tokyo Air Raid and the design of the M69 incendiary bombs. I had never learned about these things at my high school where World War II was covered in a single day, being seen as an uncomfortable subject for teachers in an international high school in Japan, whose faculty and students were from both Allied and Axis countries.

Developing the paintings together helped both Jessica and me better grasp what she saw and felt. Mom also enjoyed both the process and the paintings.

All this was something I never anticipated.

What came as a surprise was how mom and grandpa's situation still reflects current realities beyond Ukraine. Upon seeing a condensed version of this work, my classmate, Rattana Bounsouaysana, whose family is from Laos, commented:

> The acts and conflicts of war, they follow such a similar path and ideology, such as with fascism and in many ways how it aligns to communism that my family has experienced. I can absolutely understand when Masako describes how the family must behave and not raise suspicion or do things that people can misconstrue, and even with Zentaro, his work position defines how he must behave. Everything is tightly restricted and controlled. Sounds like fascism. The Chokai is a familiar character. My father describes someone similar, and that is the 'head villager.' They act just like the Chokai.
>
> You very nicely parallel this war history with family history because it very much defines the family. And as a child and teenager, Masako navigates the physical horrors of war with her own emotional fears of potentially not seeing someone she loves ever again. Nice juxtaposition of shuttered windows (war, suffocation) to open windows (end of war, fresh air) and the slides that started off with warm reds and pinks to denote history and war and then the bright green slides to depict the end of war and the fresh breeze blowing in Masako's face as depicted in the gorgeous painting.

The thesis covered mom's life through early 1946. She then went on to become a pianist, married dad, then moved to the United States in 1957. Subsequently, my dad's work moved the family several times between New York and Tokyo. This is a photo that dad took of mom and me in New York and one that mom took of me with dad on the same outing:

In 1986, my parents moved to a vibrant community in central Illinois.

One of the first mornings after moving there, mom heard a familiar sound.

佐知子：　ママがブルーミントンに引っ越してきたときにトーネード・ウォーニングのサイレンがアレに似 てるっていう。
Sach: When you moved to Bloomington, you mentioned what the tornado warning sounded like.

正子：　うん、そう。あのサイレンよ。
Masako: Oh, yes. That's the siren.

佐知子：　あのサイレンだったの。なんかもう最初にすごいショックを受けてさ。
Sach: That was *the* siren? You were so seriously shocked.

正子：　また戦争が始まったかと思った。
Masako: I thought the war started again.

佐知子：　やっぱり。
Sach: I surmised as much.

正子：　うん、うん。 でね、サイレンが 2 度鳴るとね、警報なのよ。だからもうじき空襲が—。
Masako: Yes, yes. And when the siren goes off twice, that means it's a warning. So that means that the air raid is about to—.

佐知子：　ウォッチから warning に変わるってことね。
Sach: It changes from “watch” to “warning.”

正子：　ううん、いきなり warning。そしてもう次に鳴った時には敵が上空にいるっていう感じ。
Masako: No, it’s immediately a “warning.” And when it goes off again, the enemy is above you in the sky. That’s what it was like.

佐知子：　ママ見たことあんの。
Sach: You actually saw them?

正子：　もちろんよ。そんなの年中だもん。
Masako: Of course. All the time.

Fortunately, she’s been safe from both air raids and tornadoes through their 30+ years in Bloomington-Normal. Mom and dad fell in love with the community. Even after his sudden departure in 2011, she continues to reside and thrive in their beautiful home, still driving, cooking, and enjoying the company of her friends at 93.

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I would like to thank my mom, Masako Takayasu, for trusting me with her stories. Her continued support made it possible for me to produce my most substantial oral history project to date.

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I recall with fondness that day in Tokyo when my cousin, Yoshiki Kobayashi, told me about OHMA and encouraged me to apply to the program. His parents, Mr. and Mrs. Takashi and Kazuko Kobayashi, generously shared some of the photographs which are featured in the thesis. I thank the entire Kobayashi family for their support.

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I was able to focus on the OHMA program starting in fall 2019, endure the COVID pandemic and graduate in spring 2022, thanks to my partner, Mark Okochi. He looked after my wellbeing, gave his unwavering support, and for this thesis, applied his impressive editing skills to ensure that mom's voice came through as authentically as possible for the English readers.

It takes a village to raise a child, and it took this global community to tell mom's stories.

And, I thank You for spending your precious time with us.

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