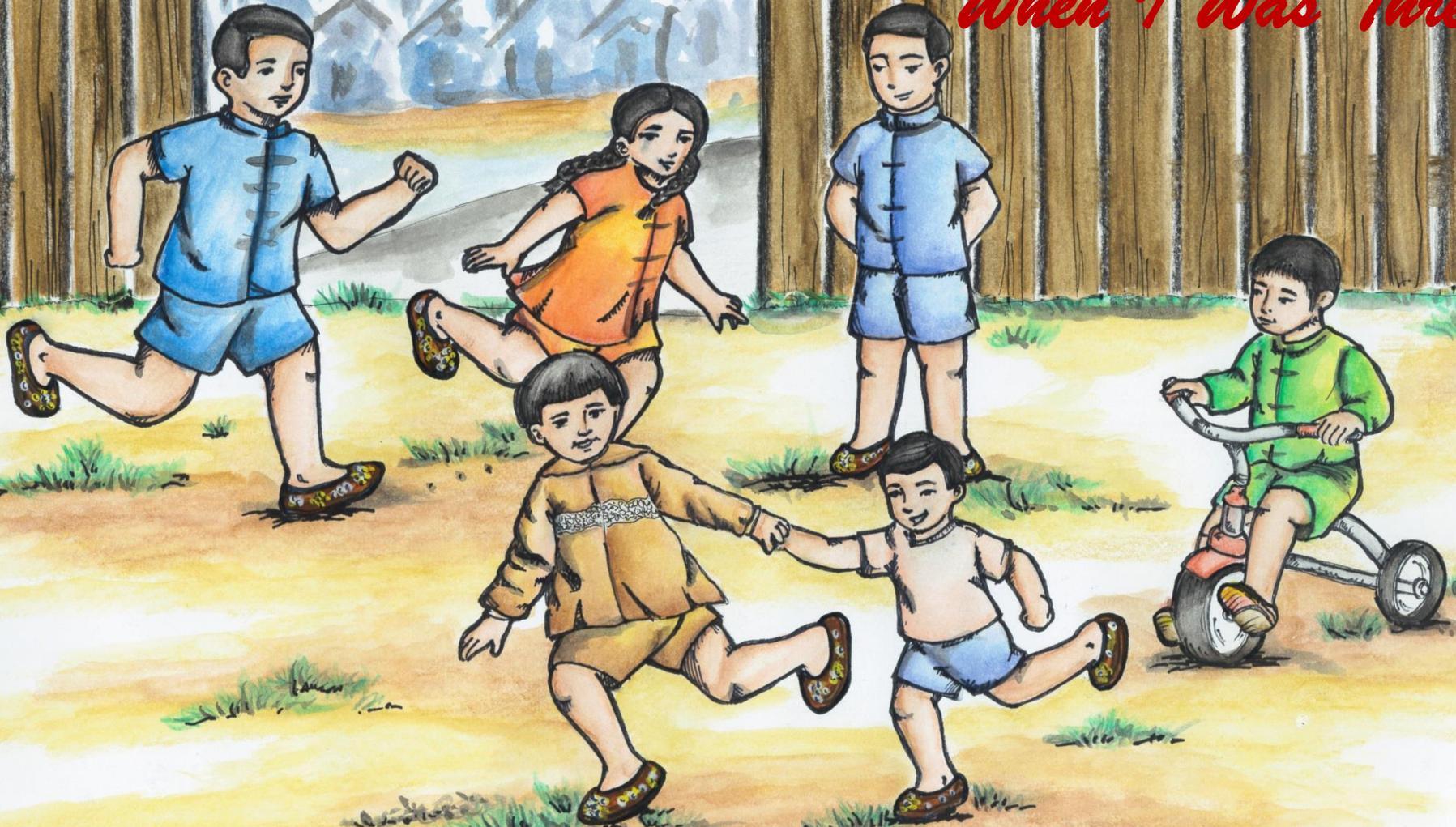


My Story

When I Was Three

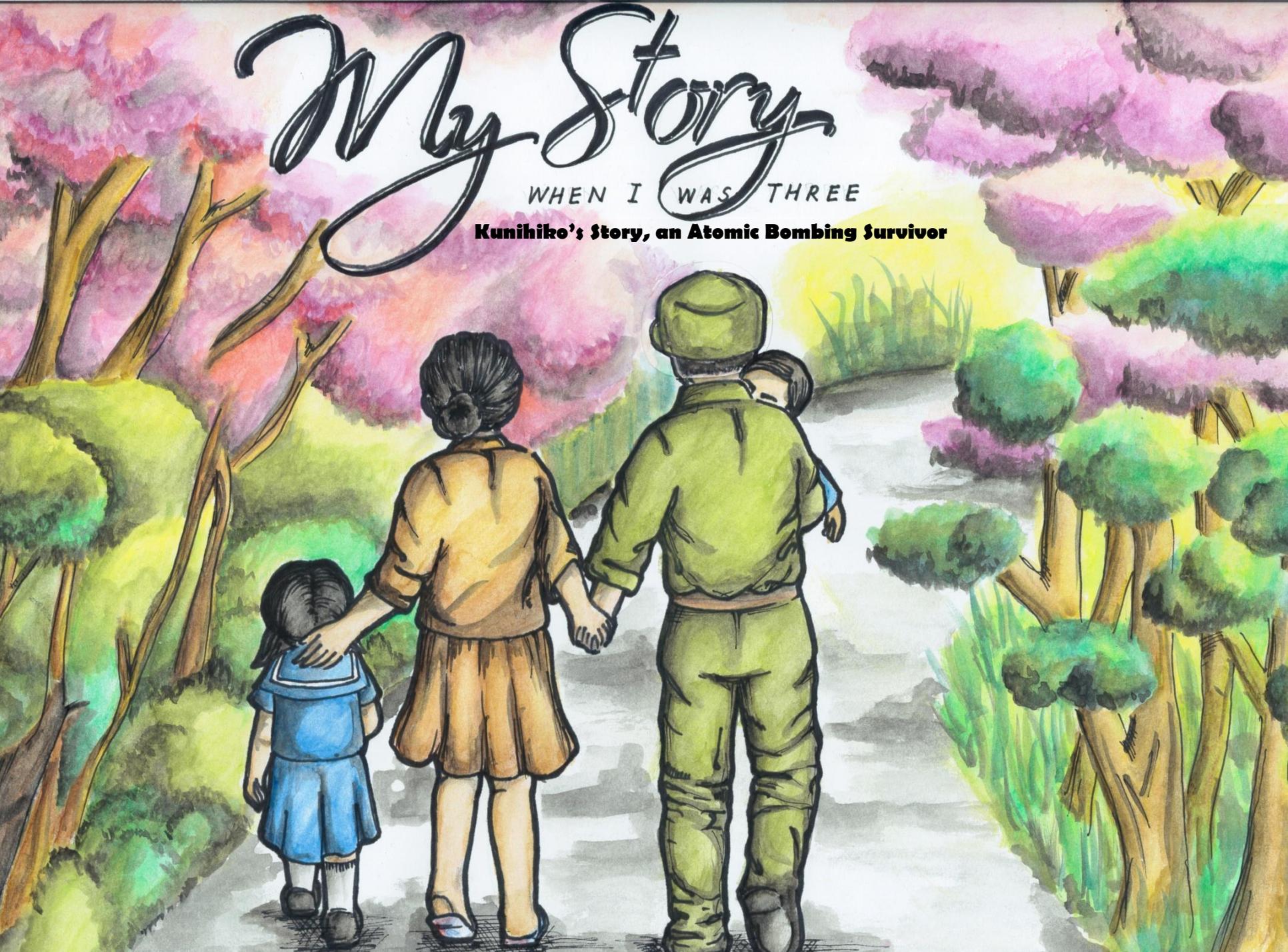


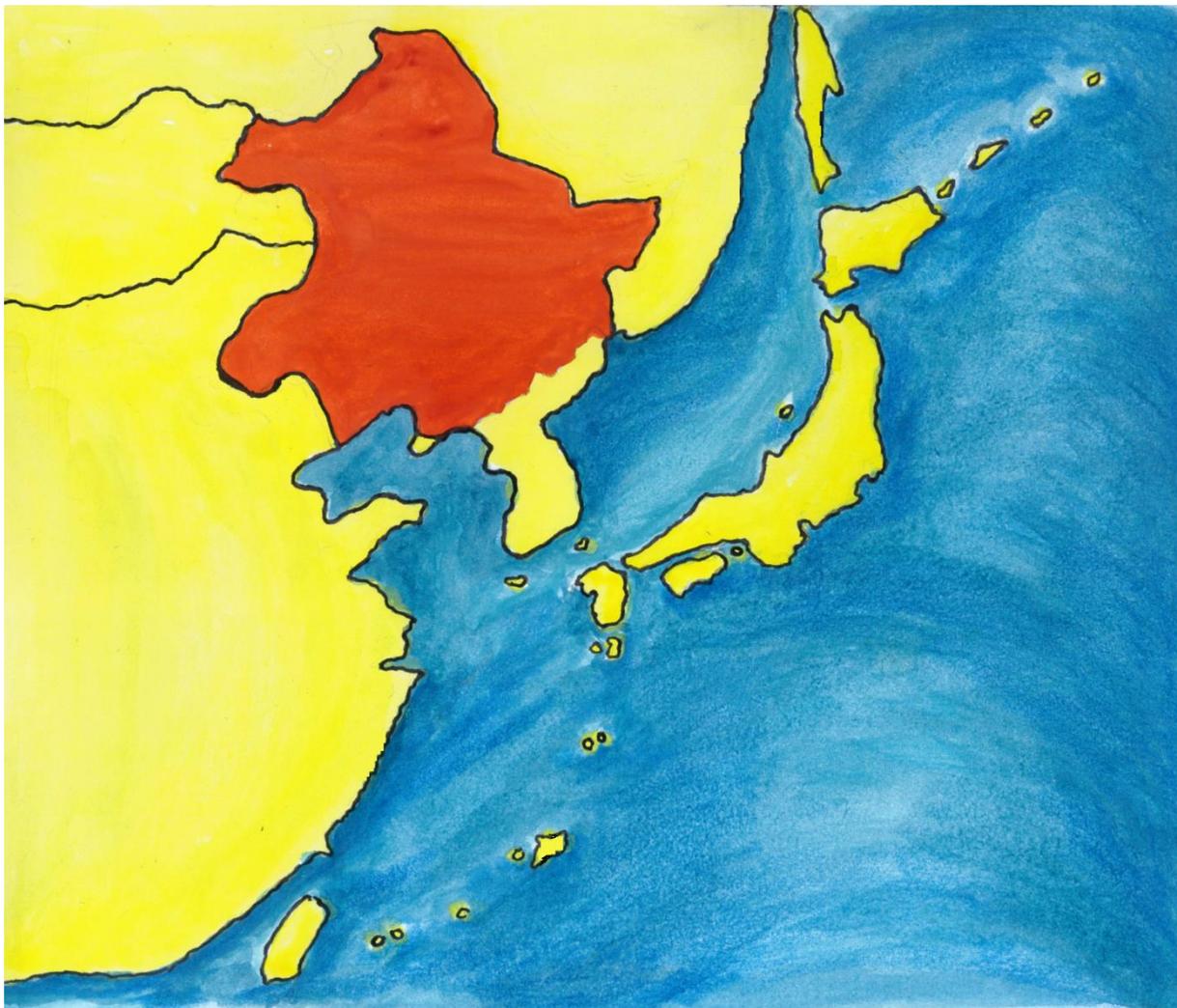
Kunihiko's Story, an Atomic Bombing Survivor

My Story

WHEN I WAS THREE

Kunihiko's Story, an Atomic Bombing Survivor





**My name is Kunihiko Iida.
My family called me Kuni-chan.
I was born in Manchuria in 1942.**

Every day, my sister and I happily played with our Chinese friends.



“Ni hao!”

***“Ni hao,
Kunihiko!”***

I had no difficulty speaking Chinese that time.

My country was at **war**.



**Just when flowers were about to bloom,
my dad was sent to Okinawa.
That was the last time we saw him.
He died in the battlefield.**

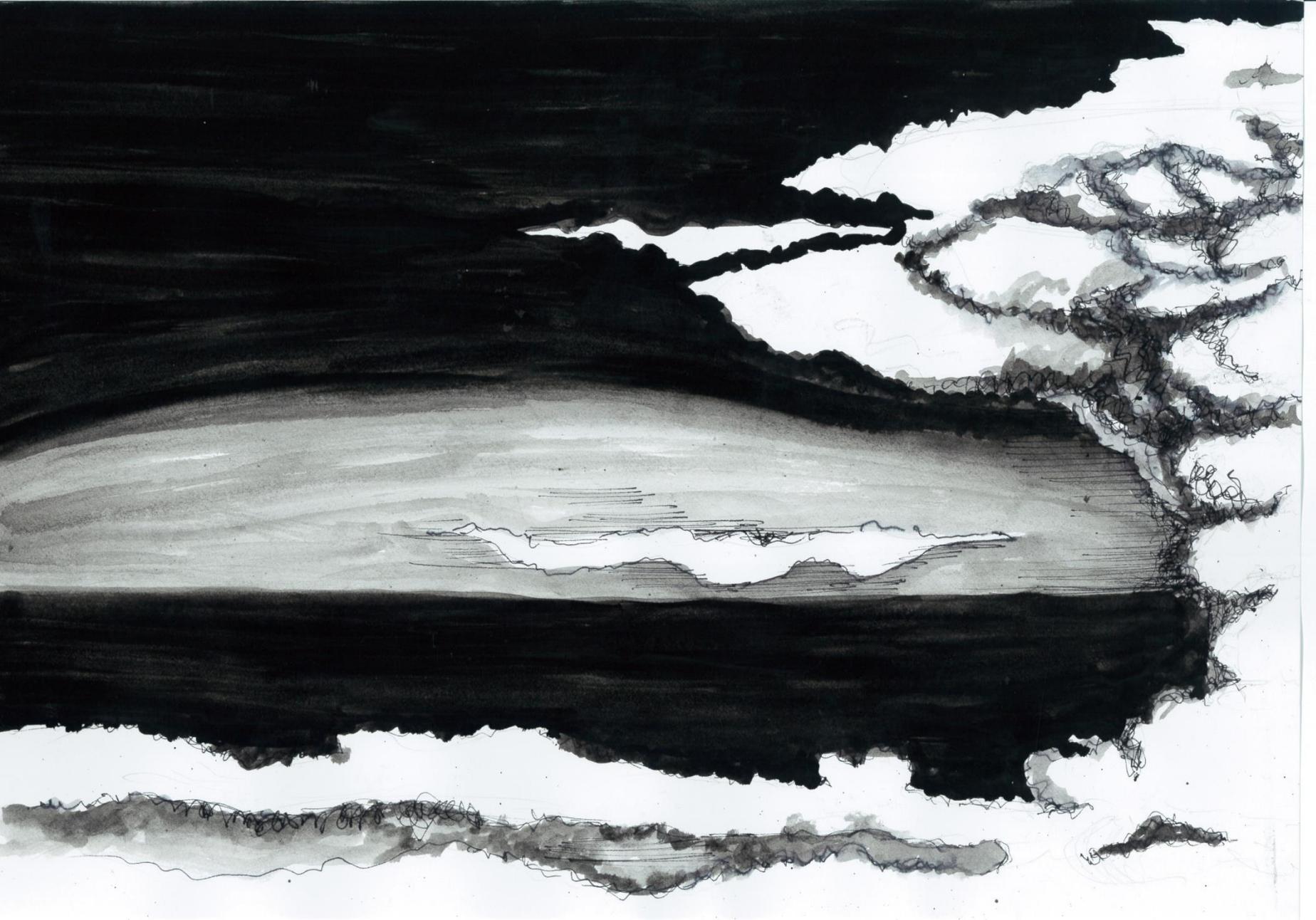
**Before spring ended, my mom decided to take us back to Hiroshima.
The three of us travelled the Korean Peninsula on foot.
We walked for many days and nights.**



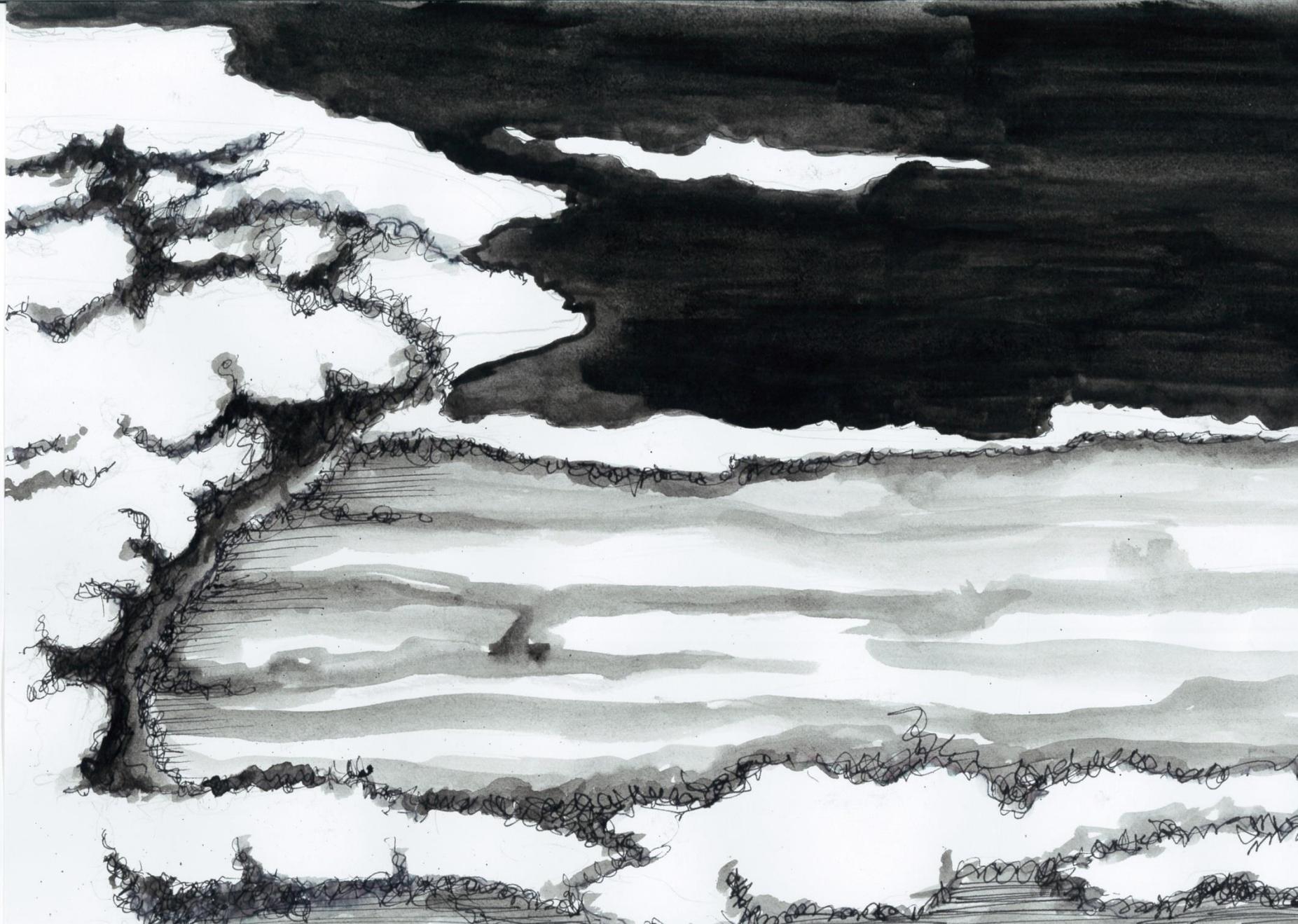
**There were lots of robberies. All our belongings had been taken away
even before we reached the Port of Pusan.**



**Grandpa and Grandma welcomed us in Hiroshima.
At three years old, my new life in Japan began.**



One summer day, while eating breakfast, everything around me



suddenly turned white as I heard a terribly loud banging sound.



**The strong wind blew and I was thrown up in the air.
Sitting on a tatami mat, I soared up and up higher in the sky.
I floated like a cloud for what seemed like a long time.**

**Houses shattered and scattered across the sky.
There was total darkness and I was buried among the rubbles.**



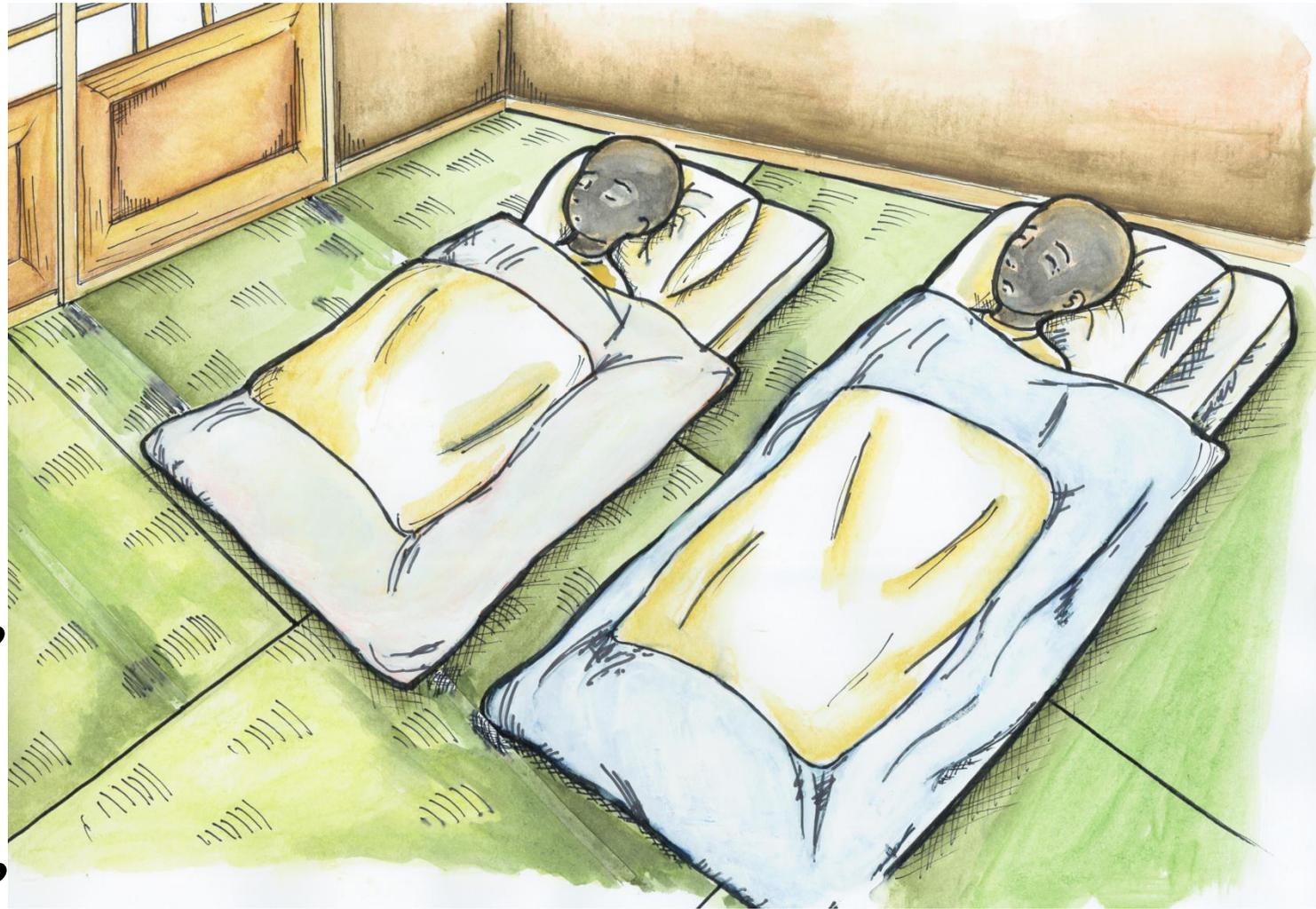
***“Mommy,
help me!”***

**I tried to shout
but I was never
able to speak.**

***“Mommy...
where are you?”***

**Who knows how many hours passed.
My grandpa saved me with the help of our neighbors.**

**My whole body was blazing hot as if I was on fire. I could barely move.
In the corner of my eye I saw my mom and my sister.
The three of us were at grandpa's house.**



“Mommy...”

“Kuni-chan...”

“Mommy...”

**My body ached awfully and I cried every day.
My mom and sister gradually stopped talking to me.**

A man from the funeral home came and put my mom and sister in their coffins. He also started to carry me. I surely looked like a cadaver.

"That boy is alive!"

my Grandma shouted.



Grandma devoted herself to me but I could not say thank you to her.

My mouth was terribly sore and I could hardly eat anything.



Soon, both grandpa and grandma disappeared from my world.



**My father's younger brother was also a soldier.
When he came back from the Philippines,
everyone except me was already dead.
He found only me- a little boy, an orphan,
lying in bed, wounded all over.**



My uncle took care of me.

When I reached elementary school age, he sold various things to earn money.

He bought a satchel so I could go to school.

Seeing that shiny black school bag, I felt deep happiness for the first time since the atomic bombing.

But no matter how much I tried, I could hardly get up from bed.

**First grade passed...
then second grade...
and then third grade.**

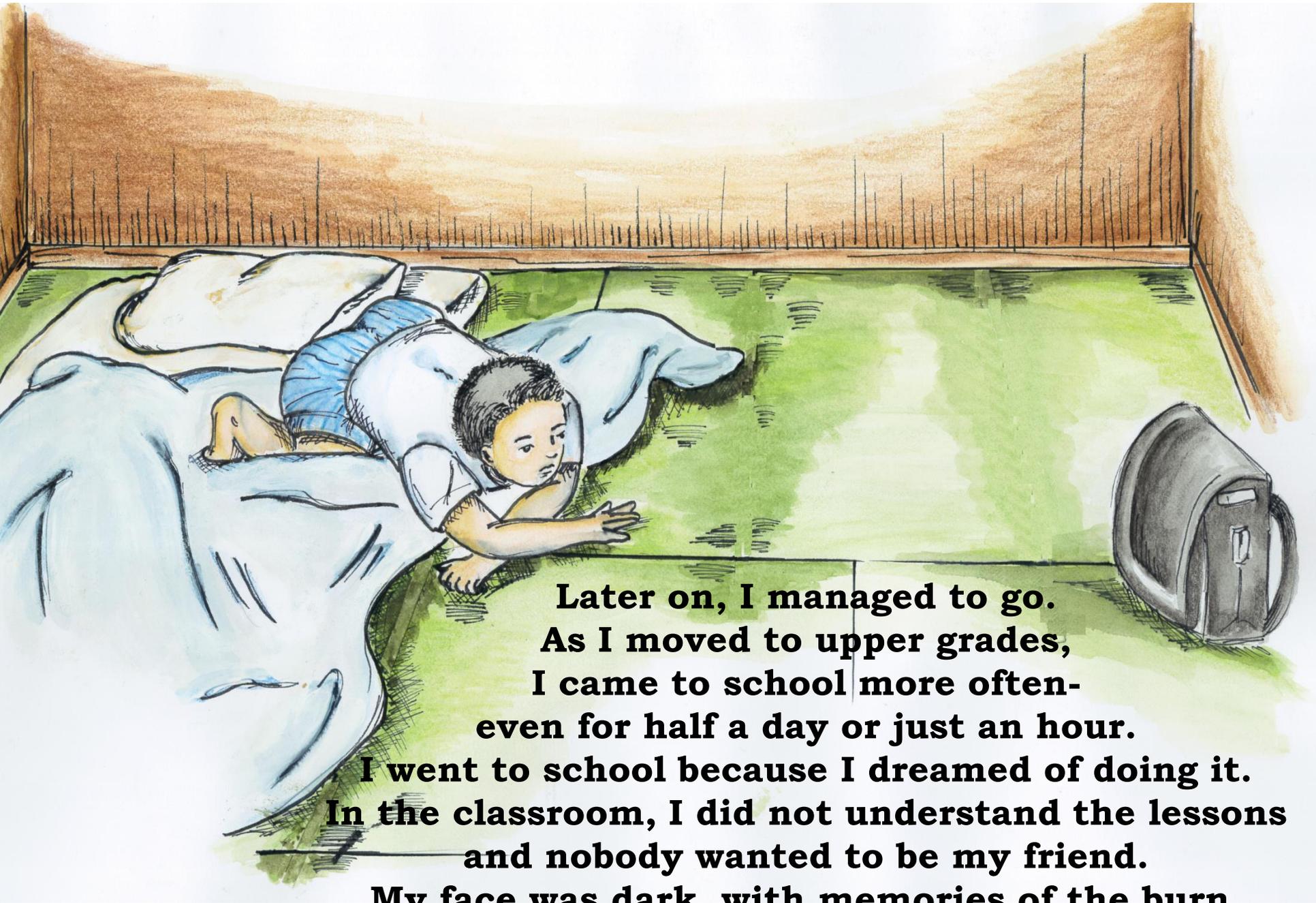
**I was in bed
most of the time.**

**My dream was
to go to school
with that black satchel.**



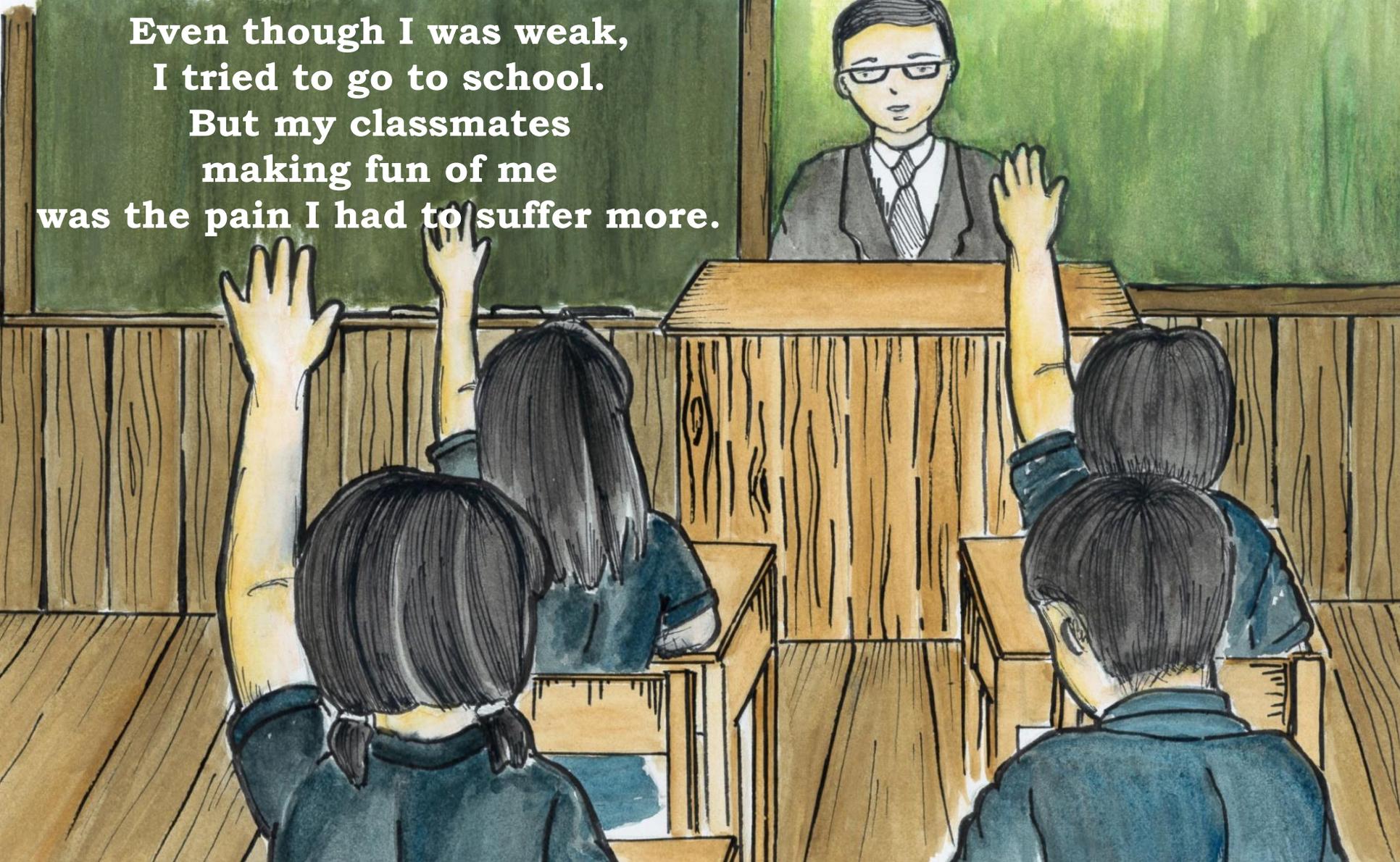
**With great effort,
I got up and tried to put the bag on my back.**

But my body had no power to do so.



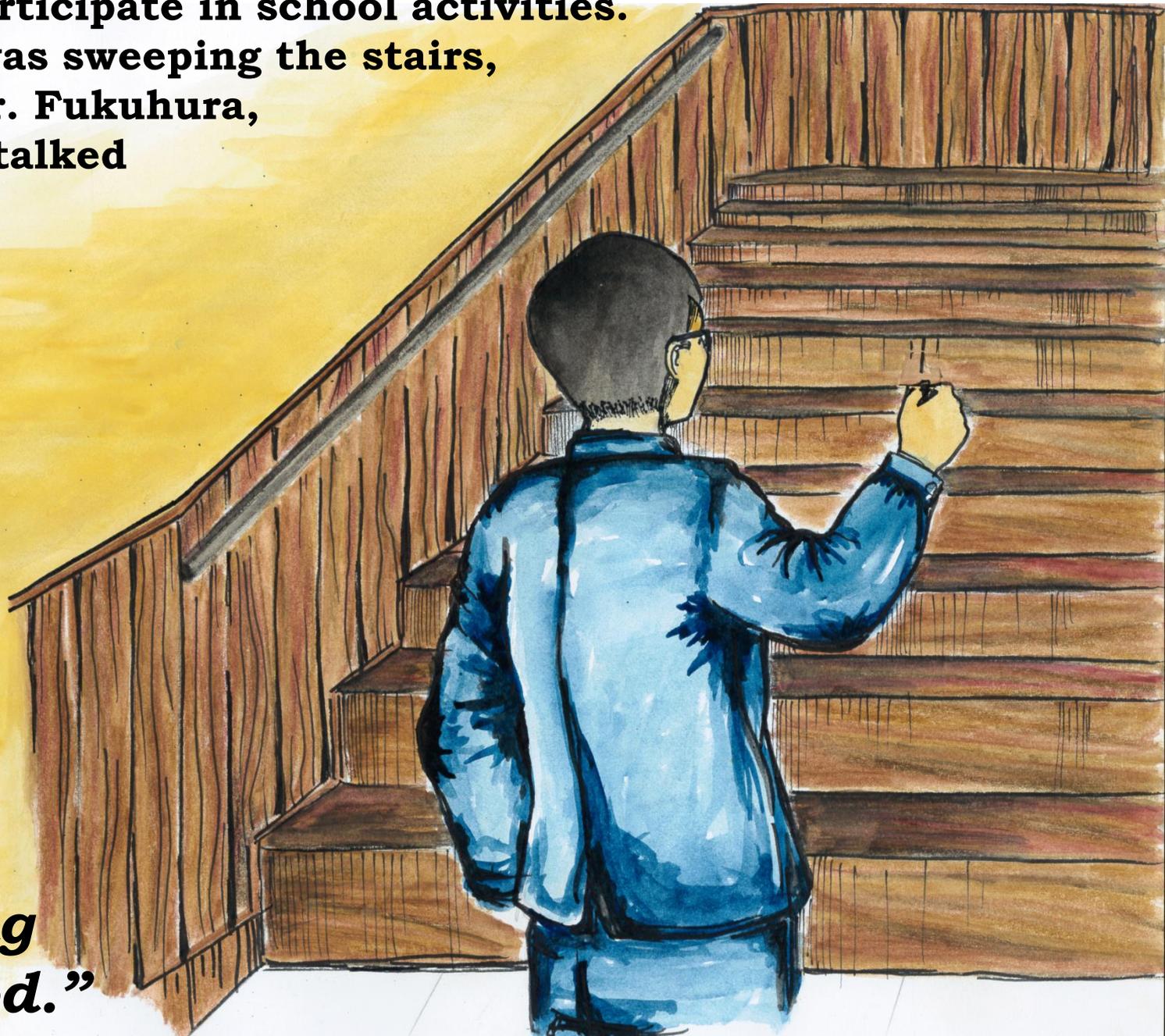
**Later on, I managed to go.
As I moved to upper grades,
I came to school more often-
even for half a day or just an hour.
I went to school because I dreamed of doing it.
In the classroom, I did not understand the lessons
and nobody wanted to be my friend.
My face was dark, with memories of the burn,
and everybody laughed at me.**

Even though I was weak,
I tried to go to school.
But my classmates
making fun of me
was the pain I had to suffer more.



**Ten years had passed since the A-bomb explosion.
In junior high school, I learned very little and was very lonely.
But I kept on going. For me, it was the only meaning of life.**

**Though I was not able to understand the lessons,
I tried to be participate in school activities.
One day, as I was sweeping the stairs,
my teacher, Mr. Fukuhura,
passed by and talked
to me.**



***“Mr. IIDA,
your way
of sweeping
is very good.”***

**I felt like I was praised for the first time. I was so excited!
Thanks to his encouraging words, I regained energy.
Pain and worries started melting away.**

I felt reborn!

**Since then,
my steps became lighter.
I studied harder.
In the next exam,
I ranked 20th.
I wasn't the last
in my class anymore.**

**At the end
of the school year,
I became the first!**

**The kindness of my teacher
changed my life forever.
And for that,
I will always be grateful.**

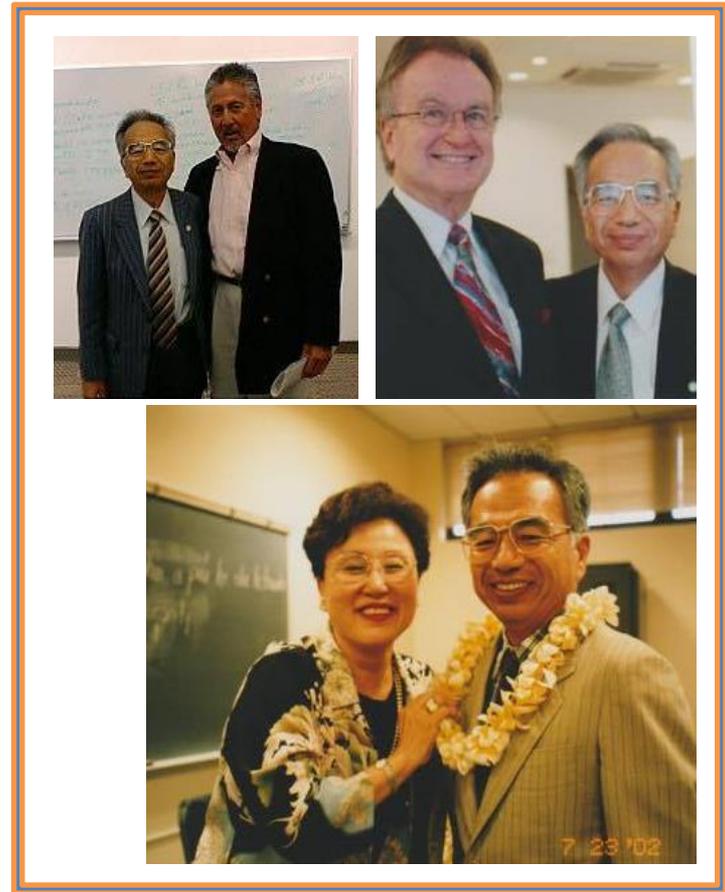




Kunihiko's family and friends



Dr. Kunihiko Iida



Dr. Iida's colleagues

**Dr. Kunihiko Iida
Naomi Nakagoshi
Chedilyn Magaspar
Almira Raymundo**

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Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park

On Aug.6, 1945, the first atomic bomb explosion happened in Japan. Hiroshima Peace Memorial Park, completed in 1954, was built to remember this event in history. Its museum, as well as monuments and lecture halls, draw over a million domestic and international visitors each year. The annual August 6th Peace Memorial Ceremony is also held at the Peace Park. The purpose of the Peace Memorial Park is not only to pay respect to the victims, but also to admonish the use of nuclear weapons and promote world peace.

