

The Great Tokushima Air Raid 徳島大空襲**Tominaga Miyoko 富永 美代子****Yumi-cho, Tokushima-shi 徳島市弓町**

At the time of the Tokushima Air Raid on the night of July 4th, 1945, I was seventeen years old. I lived in Yumi-cho, Nishi-Tomida. After the first warning alarm had sounded and stopped I felt relieved (*yare yare*) and I was relaxing at home when suddenly the sky towards Sako turned bright red. The B29s had returned, "It's an air raid!" I thought and so we left in a hurry. At that time I fled to my cousins in Nikenya with my uncle who lived in the neighbourhood and my expectant mother in the last month of pregnancy.

The wide road, with the roar of incendiary fire, was bright red and seemed to have burst into flames from below. People running away were covering their heads with futons, those without futons scrambled for them. I was lost for words. While trying to escape and avoid the incendiary fire we dived into vacant houses many times and my expectant mother hit her stomach on a glass door. As a result she had a miscarriage the next day. It was a source of immense grief for my parents.

When I returned, the house was gone without a trace because of the air raid. I had wanted to do something special to celebrate the baby's birth so I had been saving red

beans in a glass bottle. The bottle had melted like syrup in the heat and the red beans had become charcoal.

There was really bad smell that stung our noses and spread all over.

The next day I was able to get an onigiri at the emergency rice distribution point (*takidashi*) at Tomida Elementary School, I was very grateful. People were waiting to get their allowance, many of them were groaning in pain.

I thought to myself, I never want a war like this to happen again.