

Hiroshima Day Poem

Based on John Hersey's Book

By [Sherwood Ross](#)

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Theme: [History](#)

Hiroshima
I am the Reverend Kiyoshi Tanimoto
A graduate of Emory College, Atlanta,
Pastor of the Methodist Church of Hiroshima
I was in a western suburb when the bomb struck
Like a sheet of sunlight.
Fearing for my wife and family
I ran back into the city
Where I saw hundreds and hundreds fleeing
Every one of them hurt in some way.
The eyebrows of some were burned off
Skin hung from their faces and hands
Some were vomiting as they walked
On some naked bodies the burns had made patterns
Of the shapes of flowers transferred
From their kimonos to human skin.
Almost all had their heads bowed
Looked straight ahead, were silent
And showed no expression whatever.
Under many houses I heard trapped people screaming
Crying for help but there were none to help
And the fire was coming.
I came to a young woman holding her dead baby
Who pleaded with me to find her husband
So he could see the baby one last time.
There was nothing I could do but humor her.
By accident I ran into my own wife
Both she and our child were alive and well.
For days I carried water and food to the wounded and the dying.
I apologized to them: "Forgive me," I said, "for not sharing your burden."
I am the Reverend Kiyoshi Tanimoto
Pastor of the Methodist Church of Hiroshima
I was in a western suburb when the bomb struck
Like a sheet of sunlight.

The above poem is based on the content of the book "Hiroshima" by John Hersey.

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