

Slow Italian, Fast Learning

Ep.384: Tess watched as an atom bomb fell on Hiroshima. This is what she wants the world to know

Italian	English
<p>Saranno anche passati 80 anni dalla caduta della bomba atomica sulla città giapponese di Hiroshima, ma per Tetsuko, conosciuta come "Tess" McKenzie, i ricordi restano vividi.</p> <p>"Suddenly stronger lights went to the through eye. I said, 'oh, what is that? What is that now?' And then next thing is tremendous sound."</p> <p>Da adolescente, Tetsuko si stava recando a Hiroshima per vedere un film con un'amica, quando la bomba cadde. Era il 6 agosto 1945.</p> <p>"I said to friend 'what's that white thing?' And then just watching and gradually, gradually that come to and up like mushroom."</p> <p>Dalla piattaforma le ragazze potevano solo stare a guardare mentre la nube insolita si formava sopra Hiroshima. Avevano appena perso un treno - un evento che senza dubbio salvò loro la vita!</p> <p>"Oh yes. If I caught that train, scheduled one, I be right in Hiroshima. So that, we blessed."</p> <p>Almeno 140.000 persone morirono nell'esplosione della prima bomba. Una seconda bomba, sganciata su Nagasaki giorni dopo, aggravò il bilancio. Ancora oggi, Tetsuko non riesce a credere di essere stata risparmiata.</p> <p>"I started believing in God. And even these days thank God that I wake up morning and then before go to sleep. Thank you God."</p>	<p>It may be 80 years since an atomic bomb fell on the Japanese city of Hiroshima but for Tetsuko known as 'Tess' McKenzie, the memories remain vivid.</p> <p>"Suddenly stronger lights went to the through eye. I said, 'oh, what is that? What is that now?' And then next thing is tremendous sound."</p> <p>As a teenager, Ms McKenzie was heading to Hiroshima to see a movie with a friend, when the bomb fell. It was August 6th, 1945.</p> <p>"I said to friend 'what's that white thing?' And then just watching and gradually, gradually that come to and up like mushroom."</p> <p>From the platform the girls could only stand and stare as the unusual cloud formed above Hiroshima. They had just missed a train – an event that undoubtedly saved their lives!</p> <p>"Oh yes. If I caught that train, scheduled one, I be right in Hiroshima. So that, we blessed."</p> <p>At least 140-thousand people died in the first bomb blast. A second bomb released on Nagasaki days later added to the toll. Even now, Ms McKenzie still cannot believe she was spared.</p> <p>"I started believing in God. And even these days thank God that I wake up morning and then before go to sleep. Thank you God."</p>



Non è stato il suo unico incontro con la morte. Durante la guerra, la città natale della famiglia fu rasa al suolo dalle bombe alleate. Tetsuko ricorda vividamente la distruzione.

"My city of Kure was burned out. We had bombs at night time and burnt out and then nothing there, just nothing in that city. We go into tunnels. And then at night I can hear that - boom. And then I was crying. I said, 'I don't want to die here'."

Tetsuko è orgogliosa di condividere la sua straordinaria storia e anche di ricordare il suo lavoro nel dopoguerra con le forze alleate, dove ha incontrato un soldato australiano, il caporale Ray Murray McKenzie, suo futuro marito.

"I just thought 'oh, he's a good looking'. He was good looking (laughs)... Once that he approached to me and then I never regret. Never regret. He is a very nice, good man."

Il loro amore avrebbe cambiato il corso della sua vita. Sposatasi nel 1952, la coppia fece di Melbourne la propria casa in un clima di pregiudizio postbellico nei confronti delle "spose di guerra" giapponesi.

"Some people doesn't like to see that Japanese woman with soldiers. A very hard to attitude!"

Da sempre residente a Melbourne, oggi Tetsuko è circondata dalla sua famiglia allargata. La nipote Eri Ibuki è tra coloro che le sono grati per la sua compagnia.

"We are all very proud of Nana as a survivor of the Hiroshima bombing. Now she's getting teary (laughs) but she's just such a strong and resilient person."

It wasn't her only brush with death. During the war, the family's home city was razed by allied bombs. Ms McKenzie vividly recalls the destruction.

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Ms McKenzie is proud to share her remarkable story and also to reminisce about her post-war work with allied forces, where she met an Australian soldier, corporal Ray Murray McKenzie, her future husband.

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Their love would change the course of her life. Marrying in 1952, the couple made Melbourne their home during a climate of postwar prejudice against Japanese 'war brides'.

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A long-time resident of Melbourne, these days Ms McKenzie is surrounded by her extended family. Granddaughter Eri Ibuki among those grateful for her company.

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<p>La pronipote Tahlia Pynt intende visitare Hiroshima l'anno prossimo, per saperne di più sul giorno che ha cambiato la storia del Giappone.</p> <p>"I really hope that we can learn our lessons because our nana has been through so much and it's made the person, made her who she is today, and I just hope that we can learn from the mistakes."</p> <p>Molti giovani studenti giapponesi visitano la casa di periferia di Tetsuko, alcuni introdotti da Masafumi Takahashi dell'Associazione dei nuovi anziani di Melbourne, un gruppo comunitario che mira a prevenire l'isolamento sociale.</p> <p>"Her stories and the experience is just so precious and unique. And also I feel responsibility to pass what happened before to younger generations."</p> <p>Mentre le tensioni nucleari aumentano in alcune parti del mondo, il costo umano della Seconda guerra mondiale continua a perseguitare Tetsuko.</p> <p>"When I heard that war ended I thought happy to end. At the same time, so many people lost life. What's that for?"</p>	<p>Great granddaughter Tahlia Pynt aims to visit Hiroshima next year, to find out more about the day that changed Japanese history.</p> <p>"I really hope that we can learn our lessons because our nana has been through so much and it's made the person, made her who she is today, and I just hope that we can learn from the mistakes."</p> <p>Many young Japanese students visit Ms McKenzie's suburban home, some introduced by Masafumi Takahashi from the Association of New Elderly in Melbourne, a community group that aims to prevent social isolation.</p> <p>"Her stories and the experience is just so precious and unique. And also I feel responsibility to pass what happened before to younger generations."</p> <p>As nuclear tensions rise in some parts of the world, the human cost of World War 2 continues to haunt Ms McKenzie.</p> <p>"When I heard that war ended I thought happy to end. At the same time, so many people lost life. What's that for?"</p>
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Report by Sandra Fulloon for SBS News.

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