

RETROSPECTION



Irene Miriam Isaac
R2

Rita woke up with a jerk. She glared around in surprise, for a few moments earlier she was riding her "Honda City" through the busy Mumbai metro. Regaining senses she realized that the Shinkansen bullet train had just come to a halt. Hopefully it was not the time for her to evacuate. The sudden pull and the sadness of not being in her car made her refrain from dozing again. Travelling was her passion and she wouldn't give it up for anything. Today her sister's betrothal would take place thousands of miles away from where she was and alas she won't be there. In her mind she pictured herself as a devil, for not being there for her sister. Nevertheless she believed she had a greater cause in hand.

As the stations flashed behind, her mind wandered through the history of mankind. A promoter of nonviolence, war dominated her thoughts. First and second world wars floated in the air and her heart ached for the deceased millions. "But that was in 1945, what of now?", she couldn't help it. The world had moved on relentlessly ever since and subtle as never, the death toll was much greater. The UN, the Big Five, and the endless list of the so-called peace Lovers see to be stoic. Was she non-chalant as well? But what could an Indian possibly do? Rita wanted an answer but fortunately or unfortunately she had to get down at that point. Another two questions her memory stack, she thought.

It was the 70th anniversary of the bombing of Hiroshima, the Japanese symbol of hope. Two days later 'Nagasaki day' would be celebrated. "It symbolizes both joy and agony", Nagashita explained, "it is the spirit of Japanese resilience and hardwork; it also signifies pain and destruction". Rita tried to console the sobbing

Nagashita, but her red face was filled with rage. Every year the nation commemorates the rise of a civilisation from debris. The pictures of the destruction revealed nothing more than piles of dust. "How could anything reduce a 20-story building to mere rubble?" Rita pondered. But it was true and the damage done to its inhabitants outreached any limits of humanity "I am a Times of India correspondent from Mumbai", Rita introduced herself to Mikita Saki a young entrepreneur. "My grandfather was a survivor", she recalled. "He was miles away from the blast radius, yet he lost his hand and suffered burns". Ms. Saki used to hear painful stories of the event that shook the heart of the then feudal Japan. Ms Saki is not weepy, or so Rita noticed but she showed clear signs of resistance, one of the trademark qualities of the Japanese.

Rita spent the rest of the day taking photographs of the protected sites and interviewing victims' families and residents. All the troubling memories would reach infinity, so she carefully chose some to fill her report. Back in India she was reminded that "a nuclear holocaust would destroy the world and only the cockroach would survive". "But they dropped Little Boy then, and a city was demolished," Rita reflected. Perhaps the UN did play a role in preventing a nuclear holocaust. They too were afraid of dying then. She remembered frost saying his historic sign, she felt capable of correcting him.

"I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence
Someone dropped nano particle
And that made all the difference".
Her report ran thus, "Even a cockroach wouldn't survive a modern nuclear Holocaust"