Flame of Peace (For Akihiro Takahashi)

On a clear August 6th, in a schoolyard with my friends
Then a tremendous flash and roar; can my life be at end?
Blown 10 meters\(^1\) back and as I awake in a bad dream
   Everything I see, makes me tremble and scream.

A procession of ghosts with clothes and skin in shreds
   Darkness, confusion and babies without heads.
   To run for the river as my teacher said to do
   A living hell on earth, in every direction that I view.

Forty-eight years later and I think of the pain
   In a school of 60 boys; 47 died in vain.
To their memories, I dedicate myself, to remember their cries
   To light the flame of peace, in unaware eyes.

To base the concept of peace, on weapons of war
   Eventually, the earth, will exist no more!

July 3, 1993
Larry Armstrong

\(^1\) 10 meters is 32.81 feet
For Michiko Yamaoka

At Hiroshima Peace Museum, in August 1991
Next to the map of the city, showing devastation that was done.
I noticed a woman, who I had read about for years
Her story of her survival, brought compassion and tears.

My meeting her was fate, so I could understand her pain
For education of children, is what she hopes to gain.
To every word of her story, I listened with my soul
To become a delegate of her truth, is my life-long goal.

Amidst monuments in the park, she gestured with her hands
Her memories of people’s suffering, she wanted us to understand.
Badly disfigured herself, many operations through the years
By knowing the after effects of Atomic Weapons, let’s avoid future tears.

Michiko Yamaoka, lost her youth that fateful day
But her spirit and integrity, gives her so much to say!

September 4, 1992

Larry Armstrong

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Sadako Sasaki
Wings of Peace

A mere child of two, in Hiroshima, August 6, 1945
For only ten years more, did Sadako Sasaki survive.
Diagnosed with leukemia, effects from the Atomic blast
Our goal is to educate others, from the decisions of the past.

To fold 1000 paper cranes, the legend says, protects you from disease
Dying after 644, her classmates; folded the rest of these.
To write peace upon these wings and fly above the earth
A world with no more war, will prove our very worth.

Her will to survive and the cranes that she made
Are a symbol of peace for a non-atomic crusade.
In a rainbow of colors, the park honors her name
For as City of Peace; Hiroshima proclaims!

Atop a monument of stone, a golden crane in her hands
To all children of the bomb; Sadako proudly stands!

September 13, 1992

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GOODWILL and PEACE

The 21st Century lies, only 7 years away
Our hopes for a peaceful world, embraces each waking day,
To reach out to the less fortunate and extend them our hands
Our countries are so wealthy; yet many perish in these lands.

Take joy in your life and leave anger behind
To be loved by other people is the ultimate design.
Friends, family and memories; are 3 parts of the whole
No one can ever take away, the magic of your soul.

To paraphrase Helen Keller; no time to think about, what has been denied
For so much has been given; the world did provide.
Think less of yourself and more for those in need
A world with more understanding, is a better one indeed.

December 10, 1992

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