

# MATSUYAMA OUTLOUD, August 2024

—Voices of the WGO? Staff and Members of the Volunteer Guide Seminar—

## August: Heat and Chill

What happened to me that night in the hospital was so dreadful that I couldn't tell anyone for a long time.

Some years ago; not long after my family moved to a new town, my pulse rate suddenly accelerated.

I was so preoccupied then looking after two babies. Even though I often felt groggy, I still breastfed my girl. But I didn't realize how debilitated I was until the ambulance arrived.

After examining me and giving first aid to slow my heartbeat, the doctor told me that I would have to be hospitalized for at least a month. He warned me that having such an accelerated pulse was life-threatening.

Because I had all the symptoms of hyperthyroidism (hand tremors, tachycardia and arrhythmia), I felt as though I was constantly running a full marathon. I lost 13 kilograms in 3 months.

As my husband had to work, he asked my parents to take care of our newborn daughter. Also, he took our 15-month-old son to his parents' home.

Both children were treated with care and affection, but in fact, all this caused me a lot of emotional distress. My heart ached because I felt responsible for causing a lot of trouble to my family members.

I was diagnosed with postpartum depression and insomnia, and I had no idea when I would be able to be healthy again so as to raise my children properly by myself.

I felt dismal indeed, and the old hospital building looked even more bleak.

I vaguely remember the room. It was old and dingy.

On the wall behind the bed, there were faded stains.

One night, I was half asleep. The room felt chilly even though it was August.

I saw an entity appear near the door of the hospital ward.

At first, it was vague, but gradually, it took on a real and eerie presence.

Suddenly, it landed on me, clutching my chest, and squeezing my neck. My body stiffened like a rock. No matter how loud I screamed, no sound came out of my mouth.

While this was happening to me, everything felt heavy. My body, the entity and even the air in the room.

I don't remember how I woke up in the morning.

I was so frightened by what I had experienced that I didn't want to remember that night.

But it still lurks in a corner of my mind, and it sometimes even drifts into my waking thoughts.

(Miwa N.)

This brutal heat is killing you.

According to the Meteorological Agency, we are facing a record-breaking heat wave this summer, 2024.

Since long ago, people have lived through Japan's hot and muggy summers. There are seasonal traditions that were born to bring some relief from the steamy weather.

*Kaki-gori*, bowls filled with ice and flavored syrup, goldfish swimming in a glass bowl and *furin*, wind chimes tinkling in the meager summer breezes made Japanese feel at least a little cooler.

In addition, since the Edo era of the 17th century, many people have loved hearing scary ghost stories, especially in summer.

To feel the cooling frightening chill, people enjoyed listening to *Kaidan* ghost stories or even touring haunted houses.

If you like to be cool and curious about Japanese haunted houses and ghosts, visit *Eiga Mura*, TOEI Kyoto Studio Park Uzumasa, the only *Jidaigeki* Theme Park in Japan. "The Cursed Doll - The Most Terrifying Haunted House in History", has an admission price of ¥600. <https://global.toei-eigamura.com/event/19771/>

One visit was enough for me.

Regarding the life-threatening heat of global warming, I cope with this issue in a much more practical manner.

Before the end of the rainy season, I ordered double-glazed plastic sashes with high thermal insulation and light shielding efficiency for our windows.

Promising to cut carbon emissions to "net zero" by 2050, our government has started taking positive action.

As agreed by G7, fighting climate change is one of the country's top priorities, the Ministry of the Environment has set up a budget of 135 billion yen for the campaign, 'Advanced Windows Renovation Project'. Of course, I applied to the Ministry for a subsidy covering over 50 % of the total cost. Such measures will reduce our monthly energy expenses, too.

Let's see how well I survive comfortably and save some power too this summer.

(Kay)