

RICHARD KATROVAS

from "Cash Washes Up on Japanese Shores"

3. "Atrocity Museum"

Sixteen, a summer tour-bus guide, I read
Hersey's *Hiroshima* in preparation
For a visit to a marker of the dead,
The museum at ground zero, bastion
Of Nagasaki's legacy of horror.
An ancient woman in kimono stood
Stock still and stared into the mirror
A glass case became in lamplight; the wood
Within, a tiny cradle, was charred black
But otherwise pristine; she did not blink,
It seemed, for twenty minutes, and the lack
Of emotion in her face seemed the brink
Of human understanding of all pain,
The limit of what we may, in truth, call sane.