**War Child Lament, 2020**

*Fallen leaves return to their roots –– a Chinese Proverb*

Alpine waters flow beside time-worn cobblestones where

I was born ten miles from Dachau in the "U.S. War Zone."

Sacrifices from my American families, our unlikely

patchwork of allies divided by North and South,

united to free the medieval city of my birth ––

amid ruins of plagues and war over centuries ––

banishing that latest world-wide contagion,

even the cobblestones freed from harrowing sounds,

no more staccato from the boots of marching Nazis.

Yet today we hear America's remaining World War II

refugees and Holocaust survivors report increased

levels of PTSD.

Some believe that death will return our souls

to a place we were before we were born.

So I'll pray my soul shall not return to the small

Bavarian town up the Isar River, home to no friends

nor familial roots, where a forced labor camp once

supported Dachau's gruesome machinations.

Let my seeds and last leaves nourish peace I've found

here with streets of old stone and mountain fed streams

of the native Tewa *White Shell* waterthat sustained

*Santa Fe.*

No, my soul need not boomerang back

across the Atlantic ––

all my beloved country a plagued

U.S. war zone now.

–– Mary Ann Crowe

[©2020 Note: "*santa fe"* translates as "holy faith"

Related sources:

Fallen Leaves reference: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/19/world/asia/yu-lihua-90-dies-writer-spoke-to-rootless-chinese-emigres.html

PTSD in holocaust survivors and veterans:

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