

An Inspiring Spirit
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Teacher: Jocelyn Angel
Survivor: Gertrude Goetz

I sit in my room; alone, isolated; needing a friend
The world has changed, nothing is the same, I'm praying for the pandemic's end

With endless time on my hands and nothing to fill it,
I learn about another girl, in another time, in another place, with an inspiring spirit

Born in Vienna 1931, the worst time to be a Jew
Forced to transit in Milan, Italy; a foreign land, completely new

What struck me most throughout her anecdotal tales -
She sought out the mini victories and the little positive details

So much pain, so much sorrow
No brightness in her today, no comfort for her tomorrow

And yet, she chooses to find the good in the recounting of each chapter of her story
Where there was pain, inhumanity, loss; she speaks only of the glory

When a Nazi evicted the Kopfstein family from their humble dwelling;
Gertrude elects to mention: "he was a fairly decent man," in the retelling

How many survivors can speak like this about their suffering and affliction?
How many survivors use words like 'good', 'decent' and 'kind' in their story's description?

Instead of lamenting her troubles, she celebrates her gains
Instead of counting her sorrows, she diminishes her pains

Delving into Gertrude Goetz's testimony, has made my isolation easier to bear
Anxiety, worry, loneliness; across distance we both still share

Two girls both needing their current realities to end
Two girls reaching across time and space to find a sympathetic friend