

WAR STORY

While grown-ups fought, elected leaders tried
to send their children far away from fear.
Your Granny didn't write this down; we pried
it from long-buried depths; so, listen, dear:

“Those aunties in the country wouldn't see
as Mummy saw; she brought us back to war,
where bombers flew to airplane factory,
and dumped their excess pay-loads at our door.

One night – with sirens wailing – breaking sleep,
we scrambled out to shelter underground.
An earthquake, from no fault-line, thundered deep
so close that Mummy blanched: ‘That's our house, downed.’

Not ours – but opposite, the rubble lay.
It buried Dave and drove his kin away.”

Leslie N. Sinclair

(Published in PSV Centennial Anthology, 2023, and Poets Domain, 2023)

Leslie N. Sinclair is Annie's pen name for some of her more “difficult” poems. This is an adaptation of a family story, about World War Two in Bristol, England. You may find more of “Leslie's” poems on our sister website, Outpox.com

Annie has had many friends and relatives who lived through World War Two. Some of them remembered the Great Depression as well. I have only a few minutes to write this, because my husband wants to take me for a drive to take some special photos. The main thing I wanted to say is that, when things started to get really bad in the authoritarian countries, there were a number of what we might call defections – people, especially talented or important people – finding ways to get out of those countries where the population felt dominated and controlled by a police state.

Here are some videos that might give people an idea of what we might face, if we don't come to grips with the global situation right now. These videos and movies are not for children. Even young adults are advised to watch them with someone older who can talk them through carefully.

1) “Hunt for Red October.” It's a Tom Clancy book adapted for the screen. I call it a “defection thriller.” It's full of cliff-hanger-type situations, but the serious aspect of it is that a Soviet submarine captain fictionally defected, along with his fancy submarine and all of his crew. But not everyone realized what he was up to, and not everyone agreed. 2) “Chernobyl.” It's a mini-series documentary about just how ghastly the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Reactor was. Some say that President Gorbachev of the Soviet Union was so appalled by the cover-up that he agreed to try something new. This *may* have led, eventually, to the collapse of the Soviet Union.