

They Suffer for Us

In war so many come  
you hardly notice one,  
but a little child killed by a bomb  
and borne away,  
that image lasts for awhile.

These times have taken our world  
and turned it into a play,  
your soldiers cursing, and ours,  
and certain great people  
being brave and principled and sure.

They are different from us, the great  
I mean. It is hard to be right  
all the time, as they have to be  
no matter what happens. And we,  
to repay their suffering for us--

We cheer when we die for their tears.

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William Stafford  
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