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.

# William Stafford
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