

Two Poems by Stephen Crane

“A man said to the universe”

A man said to the universe:

“Sir I exist!”

“However,” replied the universe,

“The fact has not created in me

A sense of obligation.”

“Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind”

Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind.

Because the lover threw wild hands toward the sky

And the affrighted steed ran on alone,

Do not weep.

War is kind.

Hoarse, booming drums of the regiment,

Little souls who thirst for fight,

These men were born to drill and die.

The unexplained glory flies above them,

Great is the Battle-God, great, and his Kingdom -

A field where a thousand corpses lie.

Do not weep, babe, for war is kind.

Because your father tumbled in the yellow trenches,

Raged at his breast, gulped and died,

Do not weep.

War is kind.

Swift blazing flag of the regiment,

Eagle with crest of red and gold,

These men were born to drill and die.

Point for them the virtue of slaughter,

Make plain to them the excellence of killing

And a field where a thousand corpses lie.

Mother whose heart hung humble as a button

On the bright splendid shroud of your son,

Do not weep.

War is kind.

Both poems are from *War is Kind & Other Lines* (1899)