

Do not weep maiden,
for war is kind



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“ Do Not Weep, Maiden, for War is Kind,” was written by the poet Stephen Crane. The poem is a bitter and emotional protest of the horrors of war. It gets much of its strength from using simple but highly descriptive words in contrast with innocence, and also through the use of repetition and sarcasm. The poet portrays bitterness and innocence in the first stanza.

It is strongly shown in the lines " Do not weep, maiden, for war is kind, because your lover threw wild hands towards the sky" (1-2). The maiden is obviously a grieving woman who has received the terrible news of the loss of her lover. It is however the sense of description in the second line which is evoked from the word " wild" that really describes the awful, vivid moment of death.

Constant repetition throughout the poem is also utilized for maximum effect, in particular the deeply sarcastic phrase " war is kind" and the line " do not weep" which works well to emphasize the objective of the poem by discouraging the passions of war. The machine of war marches on like a great " Battle-God" but it is the poor souls who are left behind who suffer. It is the mourning wives, girlfriends and children who are left with nothing but memories of the brave soldiers who have given their lives to the killer machine.

The flashiness of war is ridiculed in this poem. Words and phrases such as " booming drums of regiment" (6) and the " Swift blazing flag of the regiment, eagle with crest of red and gold" (18-19) have a strong, orderly and official glory which is deeply contrasted to that of suffering displayed throughout the poem. The moving tragedy of the story draws to a rapid conclusion with the

mother whose humble labor has now produced nothing but a shroud for her son to lie in, along with the other thousand corpses.

To further push the point home Crane uses the pronoun of " your" to directly relate to the reader. In many ways this type of poetry is a type of silent protest of war. It is an expression that has the ability to really get to the heart of the situation as much as a vocal protest. Even if war is an ever present aspect of society, works such as these ensure that its true horrors never fade. By reading such poetry we ensure that even if the brave fallen are gone, they are not forgotten.