

For the Unknown Enemy, a Poem by William Stafford

For the Unknown Enemy

This monument is for the unknown
good in our enemies. Like a picture
their life began to appear: they
gathered at home in the evening
and sang. Above their fields they saw
a new sky. A holiday came
and they carried the baby to the park
for a party. Sunlight surrounded them.

Here we glimpse what our minds long turned
away from. The great mutual
blindness darkened that sunlight in the park,
and the sky that was new, and the holidays.
This monument says that one afternoon
we stood here letting a part of our minds
escape. They came back, but different.
Enemy: one day we glimpsed your life.

This monument is for you.

William Stafford
in *Every War Has Two Losers*
2003