

## Refugee Mother and Child

No Madonna and Child could touch that picture of a mother's tenderness for a son she soon will have to forget.

The air was heavy with odors of diarrhea of unwashed children with washed-out ribs and dried-up bottoms struggling in labored steps behind blown empty bellies. Most mothers there had long ceased to care but not this one; she held a ghost smile between her teeth and in her eyes the ghost of a mother's pride as she combed the rust-colored hair left on his skull and then - singing in her eyes - began carefully to part it... In another life this would have been a little daily act of no consequence before his breakfast and school; now she did it like putting flowers on a tiny grave.

**Comment [D1]:** Portrays love and care from family. The title of this poem is interesting as it contrasts two words which are complete opposites. The word refugee suggests suffering and pain as refugees struggle to find homes and sometimes get separated from their families.

**Comment [D2]:** A religious image of Mary and Jesus. Some turn to religion (in this case, Christianity), and pray to god for his help but even god cannot aid a situation so hopeless.

**Comment [D3]:** The S sound - Sibilance. This is a smooth, flowing sound in the first paragraph which is written about the love a mother has for her child. The sounds connect to the image trying to be illustrated - softness which links to love and care.

**Comment [D4]:** Harsh consonant. Switches from smooth to hard. The sounds match the mood.

**Comment [D5]:** Repetition of the word washed. This points out how dirty the children are and how much they have to undergo.

**Comment [D6]:** These words describe the type of environment the refugees are placed in - unhygienic, dirty and diseased-ridden.

**Comment [D7]:** Shows that she is not the same as other mothers and she still holds on even in the worst situations.

**Comment [D8]:** A fake smile in attempt to cheer up her baby as there is not much hope left. This is also juxtaposition (placing two very unlike things together) to emphasise the tragedy of her empty smile

**Comment [D9]:** Connotations of death and afterlife.

**Comment [D10]:** Suggests that even through terrible pain, she is strong enough to take it as she sings in her eyes. She doesn't want to give up on her child.

**Comment [D11]:** Shows the mother's care for her child. Even though he is soon to be forgotten she still treats him well.

**Comment [D12]:** Introduces another life implying that this life is not good enough. Comparison between a privileged life and an unprivileged life.

**Comment [D13]:** Seeks for empathy from the reader as it makes us reflect on our fortunate lives and how a daily act of no consequence to us is something so significant to someone else.

**Comment [D14]:** Breakfast and school are daily acts (happen everyday) and people get used to them. Comparing that to "putting flowers on a tiny grave" suggests that she is getting used to doing that and it is now her daily act.