

Joan Baez, I Saw The Vision Of Armies

I SAW THE VISION OF ARMIES (Walt Whitman)

I saw the vision of armies;
and I saw, as in noiseless dreams, hundreds of battle-flags,
borne through the smoke of the battles and pierced with missiles, I saw them,
and carried, hither and yon through the smoke, and torn and bloody;
and at last but a few shreds of 'the flags left on the staffs, (and all in silence,)
and the staffs all splintered and broken.

I saw battle-corpses, myriads of them,
and the white skeletons of young men, I saw them;
I saw the debris and debris of all dead soldiers,
But I saw they were not as was thought;
they themselves were fully at rest, they suffered not;
the living remained and suffered, the mother suffered,
and the wife and the child and the musing comrade suffered,
and the armies that remained suffered..