

Silent Night

Tom Paxton

I was sleeping when they came,
The warning was the same:
They've crossed the border,
Grandpa's dignity intact,
Never once did he look back;
We moved in order.

Down the steps the lamps were lit,
We found space where we could sit,
There was no talking.
We heard bombs begin to fall,
We could feel the trembling wall
Like God was walking.

The night was calm,
The stars were bright,
It was a calm
And peaceful night.

Little bits of ceiling fell,
And I thought if this is Hell
Then where's the fire?
Grandpa held me in his lap,
Till I heard a sudden snap
Like a breaking wire.

Then I heard a giant roar,
And I felt the shelter floor
Come up to meet me.
I struggled with my fright;
There was something in the night
That meant to eat me.

The night was calm,
The stars were bright,
It was a calm
And peaceful night.

When I found myself again,
I could hear the sounds of men,
Soft words were spoken.
I was lying on the ground,
Trying to move myself around-
Something was broken.
When I finally raised my head,
I could see that all were dead;
If not dead, dying.
There were strangers all about
Trying to dig the shelter out,
And some were crying.

The night was calm,
The stars were bright,
It was a calm
And peaceful night.

On the southern edge of town

I could hear it coming down,
The earth was quaking.
When I knew that I would live,
Thought, What are we to give
For what we're taking?

I saw flashes in the sky,
I saw something up there die,
All red and leaping.
Grandpa lay beside me there,
And I straightened out his hair,
He seemed to be sleeping.

Of the diggers, there was one
Found the body of his son,
And held it to him.
Grandpa lay upon his back,
With his dignity intact-
I hardly knew him.

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