

Next (Brel, Shuman)

Scott Walker

Naked as sin, an army towel
Covering my belly
Some of us blush, somehow
Knees turning to jelly
Next, nextI was still just a kid
There were a hundred like me
I followed a naked body
A naked body followed me
Next, nextI was still just a kid
When my innocence was lost
In a mobile army whorehouse
Gift from the army, free of cost
Next, nextMe, I really would have liked
A little touch of tenderness
Maybe a word, a smile
An hour of happiness
But, next, nextOh, it wasn't so tragic
The high heavens did not fall
But how much of that time
I hated being there at all
Next, next Now I always will recall
The brothel truck, the flying flags
The queer lieutenant who slapped
Our asses as if we were fags
Next, nextI swear on the wet head
Of my first case of gonorrhea
It is his ugly voice
That I forever hear
Next, nextThat voice that stinks of whiskey
Of corpses and of mud
It is the voice of nations
It is the thick voice of blood
Next, nextAnd since the each woman
I have taken to bed
Seems to laugh in my arms
To whisper through my head
Next, nextAll the naked and the dead
Should hold each others hands
As they watch me scream at night

In a dream no one understands
Next, nextAnd when I am not screaming
In a voice grown dry and hollow
I stand on endless naked lines
Of the following and the followed
Next, nextOne day I'll cut my legs off
Or burn myself alive
Anything, I'll do anything
To get out of line to survive
Never to be next
Never to be next.

Songwriters

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