

I Was Only 19

The Herd

Mum, dad and Denny were some amongst many
Who turned up to see the passing-out parade at Puckapunyal
Seemed every man and his mongrel watched cadets stumble
On the long March to the Viet' Jungle

'Oh Christ' I mumbled as I drew that card
And my mates came to slap me on the back with due regard
We were the six battalion and the next to tour
We did Canungra, Shoalwater before we left, rest assured

Seemed half of Townsville turned out to see us leave
And they lined the footpath as we marched to the quay

The papers wrote it up like you wouldn't believe
But we were looked into the future for a fast reprieve
The Newspaper clippings show us young, strong and clean
Rock a slouch hat, slung SLR's and Greens
God help me, I was only 19

From Vung Tau the black helicopters
The chinook pilots seemed relieved
At Nui Dat where they dropped us
Seemed like months running on and off landing pads
Letters to dad, 'cause its like man he's sad

But he can't see the tents that we call home
Cans of VB and pins ups on the lockers of chicks off TV
The noise, mosquito and the heat surprising
Like the first time you see an agent orange arising

So please can ya' tell me doctor why I still can't get to sleep
The scars left with me
And night times just a jungle, dark and a barking M16
And keep saying rest in peace

What the hells this rash that comes and goes
Don't 'spose you can tell me what that means?
God help me, I was only 19

Sent off on a four week long operation

Where every single step could be your last one
On Two legs, It was sore to live
You had fallen with the shells, war within yourself

But you wouldn't let your mates down
Till they had you dusted off
So you closed your eyes
And thought of something else

Someone yelled contact, another bloke swore
We hooked in for hours then a God Almighty roar
Then Frankie kicked a mine the day
That mankind kicked the moon
God help me, he was going home in June

And I can't still see Frank with a can in his hand
36 hour leave in the bar at the grand
I can still hear frank, a screaming mess
A bleeding flesh, couldn't retrieve his legs

The Anzac legend neglected to mention
The mud, the fear, the blood, the tears, the tension
Dads recollection beyond comprehension

Didn't seem quite real until he was sent in
The chaos and confusion, the fire of steel
Oh shrapnel in my back I didn't even feel
God help me, I was only 19

So Please can ya' tell me doctor
Why I can't get to sleep, I can't hardly eat
And the sound of the channel seven chopper
Stills chills me to my feet, stills fuels my grief

And whats this rash that comes
And goes like the dreams
Can you tell me what that means?
God help me, I was only 19

Mum and dad and Denny
Saw the passing out parade at Puckapunyal
It was a long march from cadets
The sixth battalion was the next to tour
And it was me who drew the card
We did Canungra, Shoalwater before we left

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