

Why's Grandad Cranky All The Time?

A sprightly young lad of only 19
Keen and eager to go chase his dreams
But the government called and had a new plan
And conscripted his soul to Vietnam

His grandad told stories of sailing the sea
An original ANZAC on the beaches of Gallipoli
Not much older than him, their bravery now legends in time
So he took the oath and signed on the thin dotted line

While his peers ran away, were jailed or fined
He answered the call, his future redesigned
He'd rather live on his feet, than die on his knees
His country had asked, to help others live free

A haircut and basics to make sure he's fit
SLR, camos, a slouch hat and kit
He's now off to face his ultimate test
And wonders if his own dad was also scared to death

Breathing napalm in the morning may appear cool on the big screen
But the horrors and carnage cannot be unseen
He'd never speak of these horrors again
He lives with the memories of such cruelty to man

Trucks, jeeps and choppers, they bounced him around
Jets, gunfire and screaming a daily sound
If you survived the day, it felt like the lotto you'd won
While Creedence decreed them all fortunate sons

Fighting in the jungles, the rain never ends
And still in his dreams, he sees black pyjama men
The powers that be thought they'd play by the rules
But they played their own game, and made them look fools

There was no parade when his battalion came home
Just an empty tarmac at a cold aerodrome
A head full of memories that no one deserves
The same curse today for our members that served

He did his two tours, his life was on loan
To be spat on and abused by the hairy and stoned
He didn't ask to go, and be treated like this
Now dejected, betrayed, and rightfully pissed

Jaded and angry, he sits at the bar
And watches the youth having fun from afar
Listening to Barnsey belt out Kha Shan
But his memories aren't pleasant of this foreign land

Decades later they gave him a parade
The people all cheered, and apologies made
For the first time in ages, he wore his medal with pride
And with the Vietnam Vets he's honoured to ride

Brothers for life on horses of steel
He's finally at peace and some wounds have healed
They reach out to each other and look after their own
And raise a toast annually to those who didn't come home

Their numbers grow fewer each ANZAC Day
As time rolls on, the memories will fade
He did his best and that's all you could ask
While the smile that he keeps, he wears like a mask

His grandkids play xbox and think war is a game
You just get shot and die and you can do it again
He leaves the room quietly so as to not make a scene
The kids all ask mum, why's Papa so mean?

She sits them down and tries her best to explain
What he went through and why he's in pain
The kids understand, their hearts filled with love
They run into his room and give him a hug

Innocent and naïve in the ways of the world
He listens in awe to this brave little girl
Don't worry Pop Pop, I'll protect you from all that is bad
Just her and her teddy, she looks armour clad

She thanks him for being her big brave Grandad
And said it's ok if you want to feel sad
He knows that she means it and holds back a tear
It took fifty years to stop living in fear.

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