

## The Herd

### "I Was Only 19"

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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 sixth battalion, yep next to tour  
we did Canungra and Shoalwater before we left, rest  
assured  
Seemed half of Townsville turned out to see us leave  
And they lined the footpaths as we marched to the  
quay  
The papers wrote it up like you would not believe  
but we were looking to the future for a fast reprieve  
The newspaper clippings show us young, strong and  
clean  
rockin' slouch hats, slung SLRs and greens  
God help me, I was only nineteen  
From Vung Tau in black helicopters  
The chinook pilots seemed relieved at Nui Dat when  
they dropped us  
Feels like months running on and off landing pads  
letters to Dad 'cause it's like, man, he's sad  
But he can't see the tents that we call home  
cans of VB and pin-ups of chicks off TV  
The noise, the mosquitoes and the heat surprising  
like the first time you see an agent orange horizon

[Chorus]

So please can you tell me doctor why I still can't get to  
sleep  
The scar's left in me?  
Night time's just a jungle, dark and a barking M16  
that keeps saying "rest in peace"  
And what the hell's this rash that comes and goes  
I don't suppose you can tell me what that means?  
God help me, I was only nineteen

Sent off on a four-week long operation  
where every single step could be your last one  
On two legs it was sorta living hell  
falling with the shells, war within yourself  
But you wouldn't let your mates down 'til they had you  
dusted off  
so you closed your eyes and thought of something else  
Then someone yelled "contact!", another bloke swore  
we hooked in there 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 still see Frank with a can in his hand  
thirty-six hour leave in the bar at the Grand  
I can still hear Frank, a screaming mess  
of bleeding flesh, couldn't retrieve his legs  
The ANZAC legend neglected to mention the mud  
The fear, the blood, the tears, the tension  
Dad's recollection beyond comprehension  
didn't seem quite real until we were sent in  
The chaos and confusion, the fire and steel  
hot shrapnel in my back I didn't even feel  
God help me, I was only nineteen

[Chorus] [2nd]

So please can you tell me doctor, why I can't get to  
sleep  
I can't hardly eat?  
And the sound of the Channel Seven chopper still chills  
me to my feet  
still fuels my grief?  
And what's this rash that comes and goes  
like the dreams, can you tell me what that means?  
God help me, I was only nineteen

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  
It was me who drew the card  
we did Canungra and Shoalwater before we left

[Chorus] [2nd repeated]

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