

Gary Shearston

"Basic Wage Dream"

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I dreamed a doctor told a judge
From the arbitration court
That he would only live to preside
On one more case then fought
The judge who's conscience was ill at ease
Thought if this case will be my last
To hand down a fair decision
Might make up for my unjust past

The next case that was to come before
This very worried sage
Was a request a-raised by fifty-two bob
The weekly basic wage
The old chap granted the raise in full
And to ensure his place in heaven
Made the payments retrospective
To nineteen hundred and seven

On the first payday after the trial
I couldn't believe my luck
The paymaster brought my wages out
On a forklift truck
I dreamed we got paid on a Friday
And on that lovely night
Mayne Nickless sent an armoured car
To get me home alright

On the way we stopped at the RSL
And as I walked inside
A poker machine took a look at me pay
And committed suicide
I turned around when I heard a man
Behind me softly speak
It was doctor Coombe tryin' to borrow a quid
To see him through the week

Then the alarm went off and I recall
As I was wakin' up
How people dream they saw the horse
That won the Melbourne Cup
They can never remember what number it was

Well my dream was just the same
'Cause I can't for the very life of me
Remember that judge's name

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