

Kokoda Track

Slim Dusty

With no shouldered arms or bayonet fixed they march on Anzac Day
Measured tramp of steel-shod heels a memory away
Veterans of a jungle war who to hell and back
Those ragged bloody heroes of that grim Kokoda track

So dig your reversed rifles in the mire of memory
The swirling mists of time have healed the scars
You climbed that golden stairway to keep our country free
Where the jungle hid your nightmare from the stars
When sullen days brought no relief from blood, muck, and mire
And death was ever striding at your back
You trod that hallowed path to be baptized in hellfire
The ragged bloody heroes of that grim Kokoda track

Oh, the devil took the hindmost and the snipers took the fore
With no quarter asked or given in that muddy, bloody war
With black angels there to guide them, salvoes by their side
Those ragged bloody heroes simply marched and fought and died

Astride a broken mountaintop you stood defiantly
As the devil took your comrades one by one
He taunted you and beckoned you to face eternity
You saluted with a burning Thompson gun
His hand was on your shoulder like a burning grip of steel
But you turned him and you fought off his attack
You broke the devil's squadrons and you brought him to your heel
The ragged bloody heroes of that grim Kokoda track

Oh, the devil took the hindmost and the snipers took the fore
With no quarter asked or given in that muddy, bloody war
While politicians pondered and great generals swelled with pride
Those ragged bloody heroes simply marched and fought and died

With no shouldered arms or bayonet fixed they march on Anzac Day
With the memory of white crosses, mounds of fresh-turned clay
Of green fields and a bugle call and a solemn requiem
And at the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them

Those ragged bloody heroes of that grim Kokoda track
Those ragged bloody heroes of that grim Kokoda track