

Granny and the Snake

I don't kill any animals if I can help it, but grew up at a time when the following rule was applied, 'The only good snake was a dead one'. My Granny Ivy Afflick, having been brought up in deadly Taipan Country on the Atherton Table Lands, was the toughest old bird I knew.

Old granny told me when I was just ten
That a snake's about as dangerous, as half a dozen men.
So we lived by a golden rule back then,
That the only good snake was a dead one, friend!

We'd find `em in the paddock and we'd see `em out back,
Then grab a piece of dead wood, and with one crack
The snake would be finished. We'd throw `im in the sack,
Then skin `im, tan `im, and hang `im on the shack!

It didn't really matter if you didn't use a stick
A shovel was as good and definitely as quick,
But Granny had her own way, before she got sick,
A pot of boiling water was her special little trick.

Granny was the greatest! She was calm, and still,
And I never saw a snake that Granny couldn't kill.
But there was one day, we almost read her will,
The day the Red Belly Black came down from up the hill.

We were on the old veranda. It was close to Christmas time.
Us kids were sucking mangoes, and Gran was sippin' wine.
When, we saw him, slowly sliding in beneath the creeping vine.
He nestled near the water tank, and Granny said, "He's mine!"

Now the Red Belly Black is as slow as me and you —
Which is probably just as well seeing Granny had a few!
She got some boiling water... but slipped as she threw,
And I don't need to tell you what a half boiled snake will do!

He leapt three feet and he struck at Gran,
So she reached out quick with her one free hand,
Then, squeezing him as hard as an old girl can,
She tossed the bugger in the air and ran!

We yelped and screamed as he flew through the air!
He bit the door, and he bit the chair!
He was only half cooked but he didn't care,
He wanted revenge, and I guess that's fair.

So we nestled down by Granny's side,
On a kitchen table just three foot wide,
Deciding then to swallow our pride,
And wait right there till the black snake died.

But I woke next morning in my own sweet bed,
And I took it for granted that snake was dead.
(Apparently) he drank Gran's bottle of red,
So she crept on down and chopped off his head.

And now we've changed our golden rule,
To, *If you play with snakes you're a crazy fool!*
It's just not smart and it sure ain't cool,
As the bite marks prove in the kitchen stool.

And old Granny's mellowed since her fright.
She blames her age and her poor eye sight,
But she taught me a real good lesson that night...
If ya' gonna do a job, do the bloody job right!

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