

BREAKFAST BY THE CREEK

I recently got married, and it's very plain to see
that married life's terrific, and it's really suiting me.
My wife's a little sweetheart and her cooking's really great.
I'm dining on the finest food a fellow ever ate!
I don't miss meals from fast-food shops, or greasy take-aways.
The best cuisine from round the world is what I eat these days.

But now my wife's offended, and I nearly made her cry.
I wouldn't eat her porridge! So I had to tell her why
her perfect creamy porridge should upset me as it did.
The reason goes a long way back, to when I was a kid.
I made a batch of porridge once, with recipe unique,
when me and Dan and Tony ate our breakfast by the creek.

See, Dan was my big brother. Tony Rogers was his mate
and I just tagged along with them, 'cause I was only eight.
They teased me something awful in the games we used to play.
In races I'd receive a start – they'd run the other way!
And when it came to "Hide and Seek" I reckoned it was crook –
they never used to find me, 'cause they never used to look!

We didn't get a lot of time for playing through the week,
but weekends brought us freedom. We would spend them by the creek,
where fish and frogs and tadpoles could provide the kind of joys
that made a weekend full of bliss for rough-and-tumble boys.
One day we asked our mum if we could camp there overnight.
She shocked us by agreeing. We were crazy with delight!

We scrounged a tent and blankets and some yummy food to take –
potatoes and some sausages, some porridge oats and cake.
What fun we had while setting up our camp and finding wood
to cook those spuds and sausages. Oh boy, they tasted good!
We lay and watched the campfire till the flames began to die
then tried to count the endless stars that sparkled in the sky.

But Dan and Tony teased me, and I guess I should admit
their stories left me nervous – maybe just a little bit –
of bunyips that would leave the creek and prowl around at night
and any boy who spotted one was gobbled up on sight!
I pulled my blanket over me in case I caught a peep.
The other two were laughing as I tried to go to sleep.

They must have talked for ages! They were sleeping when I woke.
 Another day was dawning and a tiny wisp of smoke
 still drifted from the campfire, so I coaxed it back to life
 with chips of wood created by my cherished pocket-knife.
 I went to get some water and the creek was misty grey.

I looked about for bunyips and was glad they stayed away!

The day was growing brighter as the sun rose into view.
 The others kept on sleeping, but I knew just what to do.
 I'd seen mum making porridge half-a-dozen times before.
 The recipe was easy. I could make it, I was sure!
 When Dan and Tony finally awoke, all bleary-eyed,
 I had our breakfast ready and I dished it up with pride.

“This isn't bad,” said Danny, eating porridge with a grin.
 “I reckon it was good of Mum to put sultanas in.”
 Sultanas? I was mystified, but Tony said, “They're beaut!”
 And sure enough, my porridge held some brownish things, like fruit.
 I stared in dawning horror, then I gave a little shriek –
 The brown things weren't sultanas – they were tadpoles from the creek!

“What's up?” asked Dan and Tony, and I nearly told them what,
 but in the end I didn't, 'cause they teased me such a lot!
 “I bit my tongue,” I muttered, and they laughed and carried on
 and gobbled up their breakfast till the last of it was gone.
 I couldn't eat a mouthful, and I hid my share real quick.
 The thought of eating tadpoles left me feeling mighty sick!

I never told my brother, 'cause I knew he'd tan my hide,
 but after, when he picked on me, I'd laugh deep down inside.
 It's funny how those memories don't ever go away.
 They came back very clearly over breakfast yesterday.
 But though I'm fit and healthy, and my stomach's far from weak,
 I've never fancied porridge since that breakfast by the creek!

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