

The Old Man with a Crooked Smile

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From the rocking cradle to a hardened young man,
hand to mouth, hand to hand.
Cardboard in his shoes to keep out the dirt and sand.
In the thirties and forties from a shack on Walnut Street,
he did reap...loneliness, sadness, abuse by the heap!

No love, no compassion... for no one cared for
the poor little boy on Walnut Street!
All alone he did hope, dream, wish and weep.
From a lesson hard learned and never forgotten...
alone he would have to be his own keep.

The years slowly evolved, but one day he turned seventeen!
Hard as a rock, cynical as he could be...he joined the young
men who defend...you see!

In combat he learned what true friends could really be...
but to all others skeptical he remains to this day, you see.
THEY say; he has a suspicious mind, no heart and no
faith in anyone but he.

THEY have never walked in his shoes with cardboard soles,
or lived from hand to mouth in a world all alone and down
and out, or cried night after night, wondering what life is
all about.

THEY say he's a loner, and marches to a different drummer!
What they don't know is...
where he's been and what he's done!

With a crooked smile and determination strong and wild,
he took on the world for seventy-five years and did it his way
without regrets or tears.

As time always will, it has quickly passed.
Now the young boy from Walnut Street is old, feeble and weak at last.
Yet, he still is who he always was... firm in his beliefs, kind to those
who are kind to him and he dares those who scorn and laugh...
for they have not worn cardboard in their shoes or dodged the
enemy's bullets and wrath!

THEY have not been to hell and back...
therefore, they are not entitled to judge
this man born within a dilapidated shack.

He still has a crooked smile on his face...
even though he knows that the grim
reaper will soon win life's race!

Regrets, he has but few..
for to himself, he has
always been true!