

## The Old Kitchen Table

By Richard Magoffin

There are lots of things wrong with Australia today,  
And I'd like to have something to say if I may.  
You'd know that, forsooth, that our problem with youth,  
untidy, ill-mannered, untamed and uncouth,  
is the fact that their home life is so often unstable  
And it's all the lack of a kitchen table.

Remember how once we would sit down as one,  
and Dad would say grace when the carving was done,  
our own serviettes from our own special rings,  
and we all knew our manners and etiquette things.  
Then our elders would tell us of custom and fable,  
when we all sat about at our kitchen table.

Now they are building our mansions with four car garages,  
On working lives mortgaged to interest and charges,  
there's less time at home for the tea to be made,  
and it's seldom today that a table is laid.  
There's room after room under gable and gable,  
But there's not enough room for a kitchen table.

At weekends the parents are chauffeurs unpaid,  
no wonder they're tired and their tempers are frayed,  
As they ferry their broods to arenas of sport,  
where the culture of winning's intensively taught,  
and there's more on the telly both free and by cable,  
so there's no time to talk around the kitchen table.

Karl Marx called religion the drug of the people,  
but there's scant regard now for the church of the steeple;  
just give 'em more sport and don't let them think,  
and keep them away from the kitchen sink.  
We'll give 'em more sport and the culture of Babel;  
the throwaway culture that threw out the table.

With the culture of Coke and their baseball caps,  
There'll soon be no fellers, no blokes and no chaps;  
when they all dress the same then it's little surprise  
that the birds swear as much and as foul as the guys.  
So we grandparents must, just as long as we're able,

Keep our culture alive around the kitchen table.