

Stand To!

He shakes me gently by the foot
And whispers in my ear
“Come on lad it’s time to go”
“Get ya backside into gear”

I roll out of my hammock
Drop softly to the ground
Move off to my position
Careful not to make a sound

Face the front you lucky lads
And watch your arcs of fire
It may just be today they come
So we stay still and perspire

My best mate John is on my left
And Jake is on my right
I know we’ll watch each other’s backs
If it comes down to a fight

I look down on the valley
From high up on the ridge
Down along the river
To the natives' old rope bridge

The trees pop up their leafy crowns
Through a sea of swirling mist
Across the silent jungle
By the sun ‘t will soon be kissed

Will the Indos come today?
I wonder if they might.
We’re ready for them if they do
We’re ready for the fight

I feel my hands a’ shaking
As the dawn draws ever near
Am I shaking from the morning chill?
Or could it be from fear?

At last the sun burns off the mist
Jungle noises echo round
And we get what we’ve been waiting for
The order to stand down

Ernie Yeomans