

Roger Miller, Train Of Life

Vance

Roger Miller

Words and Music by Bobby Russell

-peak Billboard position # 80 in 1968

Spoken:

He was born one mornin'

It was cold and it was snowin'

And from the start he never had a chance

And though the doctors said he couldn't live

His mama had some faith to give

'n' they brought him to her and his mama named him Vance

He was sick a long time then

I used to sit by him

I'd rub his head and he would squeeze my hand

But he never cried, he'd grit his teeth and smile at me

'cause he couldn't speak

And that's when I began to respect the little man

And I think Vance was three right about then

He started school and one day

He came home and at the doorway I could tell

The little man didn't want to come inside

He had met a girl but her boyfriend Smitty

Had caught him walkin' home with her

And nearly killed Vance

But then Vance never cried

And the only thing that Smitty hurt was pride

And he said

(Sung)

"Papa do you become a man when you're twenty-one?"

And I said "Age doesn't make a man a man, my son"

Spoken:

He looked at me so puzzled with eyes so young and kind

'n' I think Vance was seven about that time

I guess they say that first love is the very best

At least it was with Vance

'cause he'd scratched "Becky" on his desk

But Becky went with Smitty and Vance was very small

And he used to dream what it'd be like to be tall

And then a few years later Vance came in one day

And told me and his mama that he had to go away

To be fitted for a uniform

And though his mama shed a tear

He kissed her and said he'd see us in two years

And he looked at me and said "Papa, I'm gonna be a man"

Well, two years to the day

Vance came walkin' in the driveway 'n'

I didn't recognize him from his size till he got near

He came in and he hugged his mama

And said "Hey, Papa, little man, wanna go with me somewhere 'n' grab a beer?"

So we're sittin' at this table when

This fella at the bar started buggin' Vance

Callin' him "Soldier"

But Vance kept his cool

And he said "Papa, that guy is Smitty and he's to be pitied now"

"cause that's the same guy that used to bully me in school"

Then Smitty said the wrong thing

When he brought up Becky's name 'n'

Vance finally stood and said "Boy, what did you say?"

And it did my heart so much good when Vance hit ole Smitty

And it took two of Smitty's friends to carry him away

Well, Vance left the very next mornin' 'n'

It was cold and it was snowin'
And from the first, life hadn't been much fun
But he had finally made a stand 'n'
He'd become a self-made man and
Incidentally, he had just turned twenty-one

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