

Synopsis

The Cook family was a working-class family who lived in one of Sydney's inner suburbs. Initially, they lived happily and always had good times together, especially each year during the celebration of one of Australian national holidays namely Anzac Day. Alf Cook, the father, who works as a lift driver, was an ex-serviceman. He once took part on the Gallipoli Campaign in an invasion to Turkey in the Second World War. Alf Cook and most people of his age in the society always celebrated Anzac Day enthusiastically by following all of the ritual ceremonies held in the city. For him and the old people who experienced the war, Anzac Day was the only great day when he and his ex-servicemen mates could remember the time they served in the war and be proud for taking part in fighting for their country.

Alf's only son, Hughie Cook, always went with his father to join the ritual ceremonies of the day such as the Dawn Service and the morning march. Even, his father bought him Encyclopedia for Australian Kids and made him read the Anzac chapter every year, expecting his son to understand the history of Anzac Day and thus be proud of it the same way as he did. At that time the son never protested everything his father did for Anzac Day.

Then, everything changed by the time Hughie became a University student and ready to question and criticize everything, including Anzac Day and the way Alf and people of the older age celebrated it each year. Supported by his rich girlfriend, Jan Castle, who studied in the same University, Hughie protested to his father with his views which were opposed his father's and older people's views about Anzac day and its history. He believed that Anzac Day and everything people did each year was a waste and was nothing to glorify. Even, he never felt ashamed for being Australian except on Anzac Day. He struggled to make his parents look back to the past and think again what actually that day meant. Most Australians declared that Anzac Day was the great day to commemorate the time when Australia first reached its maturity as a nation. In contrast, for Hughie, the only thing he saw on the day were the scenes of people getting drunk, vomiting, and brawling in almost all pubs and streets right after the march. Beside his attempt to make the old people accepted his views, he and Jan tried to exposed what other media had never exposed about Anzac Day through writing and photos in his University paper.

As a jingo, his father felt that his son had insulted him and people of his age. Moreover, he lost his temper when Hughie refused to go out with him on Anzac Day and chose to stay inside his bedroom. Supported by Dot Cook (Hughie's mother) and Wacka Dawson (the family mate), Alf explained that Anzac Day was more than what Hughie thought. He argued that Hughie and young people of his age knew nothing about the history of Anzac Day since they never experienced it. Alf declared that what people of his age did on Anzac Day was to remember their struggle during the campaign, and to express their pride for not many people in other countries would want to do it. Actually, Hughie had mixed feelings whether he would continue his effort yet hurt his parents' feelings.

But, Hughie still stood up for what he believed and couldn't respect what his father and many old people did on Anzac Day. For hurting his parents' feelings, as a result, Hughie was ordered to leave the house.

Several days later Hughie came back home, but still there was hostility between him and his father. Hughie's mother, who couldn't help anymore seeing the uncomfortable situation in her house, became emotional and tried to make them reconcile. At first, Alf accepted Hughie's apology, but this still didn't make them respect each other.

Finally, Wacka Dawson, the old mate of the family who went to both World Wars (first with Alf's dad, and second with Alf), was the old man that could intercede the conflict between Hughie and his father. He tried to make Alf realize that his son had been growing up, and thus had his rights to think about something. On the other hand, he advised Hughie that they didn't have to agree with what others did, but the most important thing was to respect how others felt about something.