

# Kenji

## Fort Minor

My father came from Japan in 1905  
He was 15 when he immigrated from Japan  
He, he, he worked until he was able to buy this patch  
And build a store Let me tell you the story in the form of a dream  
I don't know why I have to tell it, but I know what it means  
Close your eyes, just picture the scene  
As I paint it for you, it was World War II  
When this man named Kenji woke up  
Ken was not a soldier  
He was just a man, with a family, who owned a store in L.A.  
That day, he crawled out of bed like he always did  
Bacon and eggs with wife and kids  
He lived on the second floor of a little store he ran  
He moved to L.A. from Japan  
They called him 'Immigrant'  
In Japanese, he'd say he was called Issei  
That meant 'First generation in the United States' When everyone was afraid of the Germans,  
afraid of the Japs  
But most of all afraid of a homeland attack  
And that morning when Ken went out on the doormat  
His world went black 'cause  
Right there, front page news, three weeks before 1942  
"Pearl Harbour's been bombed and the Japs are comin'"  
Pictures of soldiers dyin' and runnin'  
Ken knew what it would lead to  
Just like he guessed, the President said  
"The evil Japanese in our home country will be locked away"  
They gave Ken a couple of days  
To get his whole life packed in two bags  
Just two bags, couldn't even pack his clothes Some folks didn't even have a suitcase to pack  
anything in  
So two trash bags was all they gave them  
When the kids asked mum, "Where are we goin'?"  
Nobody even knew what to say to them  
Ken didn't wanna lie, he said "The US is lookin' for spies  
So we have to live in a place called Manzanar  
Where a lot of Japanese people are" Stop it, don't look at the gunmen  
You don't wanna get the soldiers wonderin'  
If you gonna run or not  
'Cause if you run then you might get shot  
Other than that, try not to think about it  
Try not to worry 'bout it bein' so crowded

Someday we'll get out, someday, someday  
As soon as war broke out  
The FBI came and they just come to the house  
And you have to come all the Japanese have to go  
They took Mr. Ni, people didn't understand  
Why did they have to take him?  
Because he's an innocent laborer  
So now they're in a town with soldiers surroundin' them  
Every day, every night, look down at them  
From watch towers up on the wall  
Ken couldn't really hate them at all  
They were just doin' their job and  
He wasn't gonna make any problems  
He had a little garden with vegetables and fruits that he  
gave to the troops in a basket his wife made  
But in the back of his mind, he wanted his families life saved  
Prisoners of war in their own damn country, what for?  
Time passed in the prison town  
He wondered if they would live it down, if and when they were free  
The only way out was  
joinin' the army  
And supposedly, some men went out for the army, signed on  
And ended up flyin' to Japan with a bomb  
That 15 kilotonne blast put an end to the war pretty fast  
Two cities were blown to bits, the end of the war came quick  
Ken got out, big hopes of a normal life with his kids and his wife  
But when they got back to  
their home  
What they saw made them feel so alone  
These people had trashed every room  
Smashed in the windows and bashed in the doors  
Written on the walls and the floor 'Japs not welcome anymore'  
And Kenji dropped both of his bags at his sides and just stood outside  
He looked at his wife  
without words to say  
She looked back at him, wiped the tears away  
And, said, "Someday, we'll be okay, someday"  
Now the names have been changed, but the story's true  
My family was locked up back in '42  
My family was there it was dark and damp  
And they called it an internment camp  
When we first got back from camp, uhh  
It was pretty, pretty bad  
I, I remember my husband said  
"Are we gonna stay 'til last?"  
Then my husband died before they close the camp

Lyrics provided by <https://www.omusic.in/>