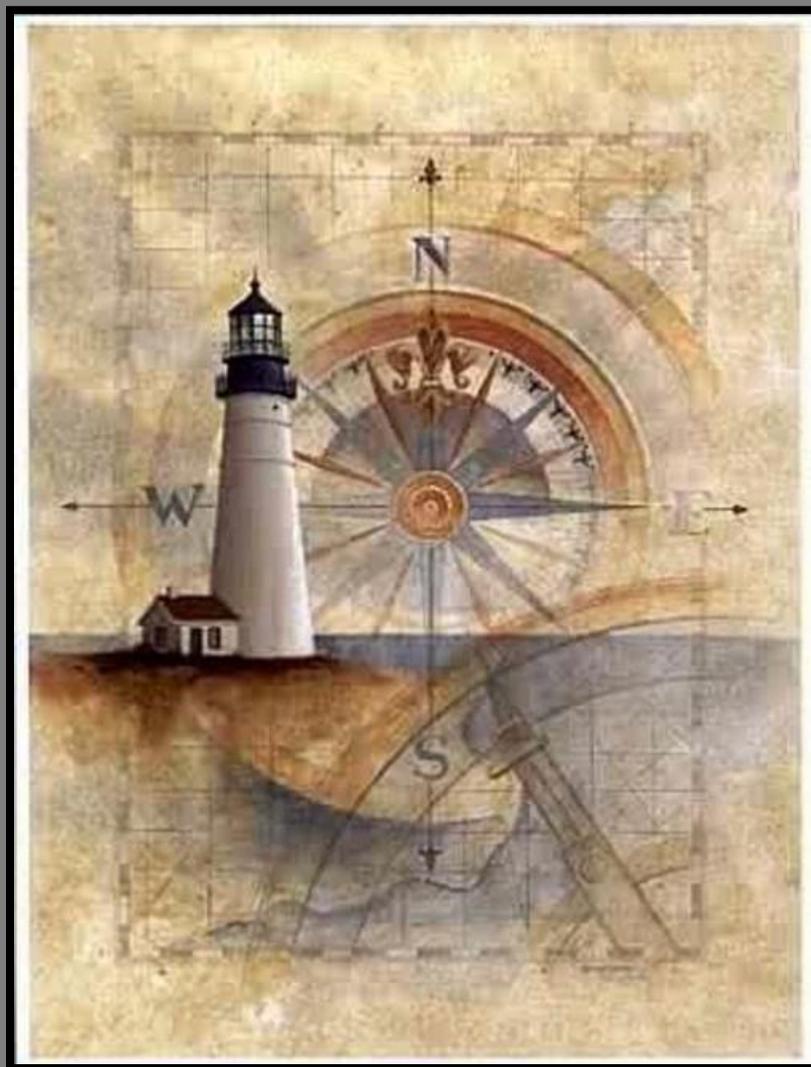


A Compendium of Nautical Ditties



By
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The Demise of a Ship

Twenty plus years is the usual term
From launch till breaker's torch doth burn
She trades the world with glory and pride
Giving cargoes and passengers a good safe ride
From time to time she suffers breakdowns and ridicule
But in general, reliable service has been the rule
Her global voyages ranged far and wide, the oceans she did maunder
From the ice of the North to the distant down under
Smooth and rough sea alike, with the occasional storm
Her weathering them all, is just the norm
As the years pass, passengers and cargo come and go from time to time
Each, in their own way, contributing to her progressive decline.
The day arrives when she is too old, and therefore must be sold
Her future lies with a decision most bold
Scrapyards vie for her steel plates to plunder
To cut and melt at an alarming rate to cast asunder
Sadly, a pending demolition does therefore loom
For which continued trading has no room
Her final days approach with remorse and gloom
For she will go to the breakers now very soon
Her faults and flaws no longer matter
Now all is forgiven, amongst the scrapyard clatter
Her demise is near, so sadly the case
The breakers torch works at a rapid pace, mournfully without any deserving grace.

End

The Captain's Lot

Head seas surge into the Bow
Pitching and Pounding as we plough
Swells on the Beam are often seen
Rolling endlessly just like in a dream
Crests and Troughs make up the deep
None of which helps getting to sleep
Pooping is to be avoided from the stern
A hard lesson all mariners must learn
Fog, Mist, Haze or Rain are often in play
The ship must sail and not delay
A distant lighthouse warns of imminent dangers, one may encounter
Whilst Beacons guide the right of way, to satisfy any doubter
Passages and channels are used a lot
So, proceed cautiously and reduce the knot
Red to Red and Green to Green
Move ahead safely, the way it's always been
Captains must always be ever alert and aware when at sea
For second chances may not there be
Trust the Captain when danger irks
For he is the one that all exerts
Safety and eliminating risk for all, is his aim
That is why he is called Captain, by name.

End

The Tropics

To the North lies Cancer, and to the South Capricorn
In between is the Tropics Zone, very moist and very warm
Beauty and tranquility are its traits, each giving rise to paradise
Golden Beaches and lazy Palms swaying in the breezes, so concise
Rain Forests thick and lush, enhanced by a climate that is so calm
Bearing witness to that fragrant tropic charm
Dangers lurk within the zone, snakes, and sharks to name a few
In seas that are warm and deep, and so very blue
Sweat and heat are the norm, each causing frequent plight
Caused by Mosquitos swarming in their flight, especially during night
Still holiday destinations amongst this beauty, many to be found
Resorts, retreats, and hideaways do abound
Constant sunshine and clear blue skies create a yearn
But alas do beware, sunstroke and sunburn, both lessons one must learn
Balmy nights and sweet odors do abound, and placid conditions enhance the dawn
All best experienced with a full glass or jar, to spirit on a relaxing yawn.

End

Yau Ma Tei

Yau Ma Tei is an anchorage, west of Kowloon where it be
Ships galore of every type, swinging on their hooks to wind and sea
Some work cargo to a barge, but most lay idle by enlarge
Crowding is often the case, so some must wait to discharge
Launches and ferries run here and there, like clockwork, always on time
Some are small and some are large, but all run well, just as if in their prime
A busy place is Yau Ma Tei, and close to the beach it surely be
A run ashore to a Bar or Club, makes for a great liberty
A short or long stay it does not matter, sailors always make time for that prized visit ashore
Where girls and booze often the main draw, and which so many of them do openly adore
But fun apart work must continue, notwithstanding, this convenient location
For our ship did not this Port call, only for the crew to have a vacation
The Master warns against woman and getting drunk, but it is the only alternative to a lonely bunk
A night of lust is craved by most, it can be costly if partook, leaving money all dwindled and shrunk
We awake hungover feeling wretched and forlorn, broke again, but need to start of another working day
But soon shake it off and start to graft, for fear if we do not, we will be docked our hard-earned pay
Yau Ma Tei is a playground for all, the meekest and the bold, it does not matter if you be young or old
Be aware of the dangers that lurk ashore, for ladies of the night are apt to dupe, thinking they sit on gold
Time to sail through Lye Ye Mun Pass, longing for the next Port call, but more money first I must earn
Four weeks at sea lay ahead, giving time to amass my hard-gained cash, ready for my next sojourn.

End

Hong Kong Odyssey

Liverpool to Hong Kong was my trip, to the Orient I was bound
The graceful "Canton" was the ship, voyaging thirty days, did me astound
So young and innocent at that time, therefore what to expect I was unaware
Disembarked from the ship to strange shores on which to live, throngs of people everywhere
My dwelling was to be in Somerset Road, this fine address to be my new abode
Kowloon Tong was its name, a leafy suburb all the same, just at the top of Waterloo Road
Peaceful in its widest scope this new home I soon grew to love, with its flaming trees ablaze with color
Set in my memory forever, always there and Oh so dear, crystal clear like no other
Years of happiness did ensue, unique and exciting with daily adventures forever anew
My fledgling years I did embrace, life was fast, and with maturity I grew
Years later we did move to the Peak, a social elevation so to speak
Unable to express the true magnificence of the view, from that patio, I was to keep
Veiled in Asian traditions which never failed to impress, and Chinese culture always did endure
My Cathay venture was real and lasted forever more, so vivid, and so pure
A lifetime of golden years did follow, so deeply treasured, and locked for evermore
As old age approached, I must confess, I loved Hong Kong none the less
Time marched on and the years did pass, and alas, it seemed no sooner time but to go
I met this day with much regret, because of my many fond memories, that will forever glow
A lifestyle second to none with peace and harmony at its core, even Typhoons did not endure
Lifelong friendships did abundantly flourish to remain and allure, to enhance nostalgia for evermore
I arrived at Kai Tak full of remorse, and sad, for what wonderful years I had enjoyed
Down the runway the plane sped, with solitary tear in my eye, never again in Hong Kong to be employed
Bound for Melbourne to retire with grace, but what a difference in culture, lifestyle, and daily pace
A land of plenty I must admit, but it cannot compare with my old Hong Kong base.

End

My River Runs Deep

My River runs deep, twists, and turns and does it rapidly flow
From whence it came and where it goes, I do not know
Through fogs, rains, and snow it does but run, always reaching towards a place unknown
It gives me joy to watch in awe, gliding endlessly the way it does, as if all alone
Trees and flowers fringe its flanks, for which we all must give God our sincere thanks
Its hue is dark which signals waters deep along its course, so amongst the best it surely ranks
Fisher folk do occasionally cast with whipping rod, a fine line tipped with luring fly
But skill is needed in their quest of hooking a fish, they may wish to fry
Beauty lies but at my river's heart, adorned with a lush and tranquil charm
For all to enjoy and cherish, so make certain it does not come to harm
A picnic spot so scarcely found with serenity so profound, does abound
But the sight of a bus fills me with gloom, for fear of refuse left strewn around
Its pristine beauty we must forever guard for the enjoyment of others to reap
My river is my soul and joy, so disregard for its upkeep will surely make me weep
Wildlife does surround the riverbank all along, to which it rightfully does belong
Diverse with all its traits flowing with timeless grace, treasure always, to prolong
Love of my river cannot be overstated, to do so would be in my view, be outdated
Amongst the best I must confess, is the river's serenity so aptly and highly rated
It flows so swiftly all along its way, forging a route through the landscape
The trees that line its twirling path, sway in the wind, but on calm days do only boldly drape
A weir in my river to raise the level and divert its flow, is there for all to see and enjoy
The importance of keeping my river clean and pristine, is a thought all should employ
Long nurtured flora and fauna along its rim, attracts more wildlife to this habitat
Keeping this blessing for fear that one day it may perish, preservation we must all work at
Its aim is the wide expanse of the ocean deep, which will forever its waters reap
But until that time, we must all observe, nature's laws to preserve and tend to the river's upkeep.

End

A Sailor's Elusive Korean Goddess

Amongst the throngs I did behold, a captivating lady in the corner of the Bar
Full of secrets, charm, and intellect in her every way, my eyes are drawn to her as if a shining Star
Quiet and sensual with a mystery in her hidden glances, her beauty it does greatly enhance
So, I move closer, it is worth a chance, to see if I can engage her in a happy enchanting parlance
At first shy and reticent, but after a few sips of wine, she seems more open to breaking her reserve
We share laughter and joy for many hours, but to be honest the move towards her took all my nerve
With the passing of time and a few meetings more, my interest does increase beyond that of adore
I have discovered her name, a Korean woman of bonding chemistry, but still so able to elude
We become friends in every way, but still she shuns my gestures, and remains distant to my regret
I keep trying to secure her magnetic vibes and cherished charms to no avail, remaining as a silhouette
I persist because my feelings declare, I need her more than words can say, to capture all her fervor
My efforts will persist, to break the ice and level the field, so I remain just like an observer
There are times when my frustration does abound, but I keep it inside and make not a sound
I dream and pray that one day, I will succeed with my quest, then my inner joy will abound
Distance does not help my efforts to reflect on her grace and brilliant qualities, in such abundance
I intend to further pursue, to conquer my endeavor, placing no limit on my time or patience
For this is a quest in which I should succeed, to fully justify my inner need for her, one day to possess
She captures my heart as if in a vice, regardless of distance, she will remain my elusive Korean Goddess
But alas, it is back to sea I must go, with my ship to cross the oceans to places far away
It is the story of my sailor's life, much to my despair, my desires must wait for another day
We agree to meet when I return, meantime both our hearts do but yearn in longing
For many days must pass until that time, bringing on sadness and a fear of foreboding
At sea time passes quickly, and days merge into weeks, with hints of things that may come
Until finally, the day arrives, but alas the Bar is empty, and my Korean Goddess has flown therefrom.

End

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