

THE SHEER AND THE COAMING

© 5/11/08 – Philip Young

1/ IN THE DAYS BACK BEFORE THE OUTBOARD MOTOR  
THE DIESEL, THE TURBINE AND ALL  
THE GRACE OF THE THING COULD CAUSE A SEAMAN TO SING  
AS HE RACED TO BRING IN THE HAUL  
AND THE FASTEST OF THOSE ON PORT PHILLIP  
TOOK COUTA FISH OUT PAST 'THE RIP'  
SAILING OUT WITH THE DAWN IN THE CALM AND THE STORM  
RETURNING TO PORT AT A CLIP.

CH/ TAKE A FIX ON THE LIGHTHOUSE AT LONSDALE  
TAKE NOTE OF THE STATE OF THE TIDE  
AND RACE THROUGH 'THE RIP' UP TO QUEENSCLIFF  
PUT THE CATCH ON THE TRAIN OVERNIGHT  
AND IT'LL BE IN THE MARKET COME LIGHT.

2/ THEY WERE KNOWN FOR THEIR FEISTY DEMEANOUR  
TWENTY SIX FOOT OF KAURI AND SAIL  
OPEN TO THE SKY AND THE WILD SEA BIRDS CRY  
TO THE SUN, THE WIND AND THE SPRAY  
WITH THEIR BACKS TO THE BREEZE AT THE GUNNELS  
MAIN SHEET AND TILLER IN HAND  
THOSE MEN OF THE FOAM TURNED THE BOWSPRIT FOR HOME  
WITH THEIR QUOTA OF COUTA TO LAND

CH/

3/ NOW ONCE ON THE DOCK YOU COULD LINGER  
AND GAZE O'ER THE YACHTS AT THE PIER  
WHERE MOORED ON THEIR BUOYS DEVOID OF ALL JOY  
WERE THE LAST OF THE COUTA'S, I FEARED  
THEY'D BEEN CABINED, DIS-MASTED AND POWERED UP  
TILL YOU WERE HARD PUT TO MAKE OUT THE LINES  
OF THE FINEST OF BOATS THAT PORT PHILLIP FLOATED  
WHEN FISHERMEN SAILED THEM WITH PRIDE

BR/ BUT THERE'S MOVEMENT DOWN AT THE BOATYARDS  
AND IT'S SPREADING FROM QUEENSCLIFF AND RYE  
PLANS HAVE BEEN MADE, KEELS HAVE BEEN LAID  
SO THE LEGENDRY COUTA WON'T DIE  
FOR THE SWEEP OF THE SHEER AND THE COAMING  
AS THEY DRAW A MAN OUT THROUGH THE HEADS  
IS ETCHED IN THE MINDS OF THOSE LEFT BEHIND  
SAILING THE DREAMS IN THEIR BEDS

4/ AND A WINTER OF PAINT AND EPOXY  
WITH YOUR BEAUTY UP ON THE HARD  
WON'T KEEP OUT THE SPRAY FROM LONG DISTANT DAYS  
THAT SWELLS THE PLANKS OF YOUR HEART  
FOR WHAT YOU CRAVE IN YOUR DEEPEST OF SLUMBERS  
TO CARRY YOU OUT FROM THE QUAY  
IS THE BEAUTY, THE POWER AND THE GLORY  
OF A COUTA BOAT BREASTING THE SEA

CH/ SO TAKE A FIX ON THE LIGHTHOUSE AT LONSDALE  
TAKE NOTE OF THE STATE OF THE TIDE  
AND RACE THROUGH 'THE RIP' TO SORRENTO  
FOR A PINT IN THE CLUBHOUSE TONIGHT

CODA/ WHERE YOU'LL YARN WITH YOUR CREW AND COMPANIONS  
AS THE SCHOONERS KEEP CROSSING THE BAR  
OF DAYS THAT ARE DONE AND THE YEARS YET TO COME  
FOR COUTA BOATS NEAR AND FAR

THOUGH THEIR HEYDAYS ARE GONE, THEIR SPIRIT LIVES ON  
TO THE COUTA BOAT LET'S RAISE A JAR!