

Peter Anderson & Co

Slim Dusty

He had offices in Sydney, many years ago,
And his shingle bore the legend "Peter Anderson and
Co.",
But his real name was Careless, as the fellows
understood,
And his relatives decided that he wasn't any good.

'Twas their gentle tongues that blasted any `character'
he had,
He was fond of beer and leisure, and the Co. was just
as bad.
It was limited in number to a unit, was the Co.
'Twas a bosom chum of Peter and his Christian name was
Joe.

Oh, the office was their haven, for they lived there
when hard-up,
A `daily' for a table cloth, a jam tin for a cup;
And if the chance, the landlord's bailiff happened
round in times like these,
Just to seize the office-fittings, well, there wasn't
much to seize.

And when morning brought the bailiff, there'd be
nothing to be seen,
Save a piece of bevelled cedar where the tenant's plate
had been;
And there'd be no sign of Peter, and there'd be no sign
of Joe,
For another portal boasted "Peter Anderson and Co."

Peter always met you smiling, always seemed to know you
well,
Always gay and glad to see you, always had a joke to
tell;
He could laugh when all was gloomy, he could grin when
all was blue,
Sing a comic song and act it, and appreciate one too.

Glorious drunk and happy, till they heard the roosters
crow,
And the landlady and neighbours made complaints about
the Co.
But that life! it might be likened to a reckless
drinking-song,
But it couldn't last for ever, and it never lasted
long.

Debt-collecting ruined Peter, people talked him round
too oft,
For his heart was soft as butter, and the Co.'s was
just as soft;
But, of course, it wasn't business, only Peter's
careless way;
And perhaps it pays in heaven, but on earth it doesn't
pay.

They got harder up than ever, and, to make it worse,
the Co.
Went more often round the corner than was good for him
to go.
"I might live," he said to Peter, "but I haven't got
the nerve,
I am going, going, no reserve.

Peter's fault is very common, very fitting and bereft
Paid the undertaker cash and then got drunk on what was
left;
Then he shed some tears, half-maudlin, on the grave
where lay the Co.,
And he drifted to a township where the city failures
go.

In a town of wrecks and failures, they appreciated him.
Men who might have been, who had been, but who were not
in the swim,
They would ask him who the Co. was, that queer company
he kept,
And he'd always answer vaguely, he would say his
partner slept;

That he had a 'sleeping partner', jesting while his
spirit broke,
And they grinned above their glasses, for they took it
for a joke.
Till at last there came a morning when his smile was
seen no more,
He was gone from out the office, and his shingle from
the door,

And a boundary-rider jogging out across the neighb'ring
run,
Was attracted by a something, that was blazing in the
sun;
And he found that it was Peter, lying peacefully at
rest,
With a bottle close beside him and the shingle on his
breast.

Yes he had offices in Sydney, many years ago,
And his shingle bore the legend "Peter Anderson and
Co.",