



The Last Load

By Richard Burton

*So warm a-work they were, they hardly knew
The sun was westering, and now, behold,
The horizon is a blaze of transient gold,
And all the air is pierced and molten through*

*With that strange peace the twilight brings, the dull
And sullen monoguing of the heat
Grows typically hot, cool and sweet,
Beats a thrush whose note is spiritual*

*Flutes once, and then again, the crispy hay
Breathes odors out, dew-touched, the horses lift
Long sensitive ears, as haply they have sniffed
An earned reward of oats, and grudge away*

*Then, bronzed and tired, do the hayers haste
To mount the wain, the last load shaken down,
And so sway creaking toward the little town
Where hearths are swept by women pleasant-faced.*

*Good fortune this: strong hours of labor, blast
With courage and with strength, and with a sun
Above to stead their work, and, labor done,
A bird, a breeze, a splendor in the west.*

