Tull Jethro
"Heavy Horses"

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Iron-clad feather-feet pounding the dust

An October's day, towards evening

Sweat embossed veins standing proud to the plough

Salt on a deep chest seasoning

Last of the line at an honest day's toil

Turning the deep sod under

Flint at the fetlock, chasing the bone

Flies at the nostrils plunder.

The Suffolk, the Clydesdale, the Percheron vie

with the Shire on his feathers floating

Hauling soft timber into the dusk

to bed on a warm straw coating.

Heavy Horses, move the land under me

Behind the plough gliding --- slipping and sliding free

Now you're down to the few

And there's no work to do

The tractor's on its way.

Let me find you a filly for your proud stallion seed

to keep the old line going.

And we'll stand you abreast at the back of the wood

behind the young trees growing

To hide you from eyes that mock at your girth,

and your eighteen hands at the shoulder

And one day when the oil barons have all dripped dry

and the nights are seen to draw colder

They'll beg for your strength, your gentle power

your noble grace and your bearing

And you'll strain once again to the sound of the gulls

in the wake of the deep plough, sharing.

Standing like tanks on the brow of the hill

Up into the cold wind facing

In stiff battle harness, chained to the world

Against the low sun racing

Bring me a wheel of oaken wood

A rein of polished leather

A Heavy Horse and a tumbling sky

Brewing heavy weather.

Bring a song for the evening

Clean brass to flash the dawn

across these acres glistening

like dew on a carpet lawn

In these dark towns folk lie sleeping

as the heavy horses thunder by

to wake the dying city

with the living horseman's cry

At once the old hands quicken ---

bring pick and wisp and curry comb ---

thrill to the sound of all

the heavy horses coming home