

Night Hawk

Michael Martin Murphey

I'm up tonight in the pinnacles bold
Where the rim towers high
Where the air is clear and the wind blows cold
And there's only the horses and I
And the valley swims like a silver sea
In the light of the big full moon
Strong and clear there comes to me
The lilt of the first guard's tune

I've travelled better than half my trail
I'm well down the further slope
I've seen my dreams and ambitions fail
And memory replaces hope
It must be true cause I've heard it say
That only the good die young
And tough old cusses like me ain't dead
We stay till the last dog's hung

But I've lived my life and I took my chance
Regardless of law of vow
I played the game and I've had my dance
And I'm paying the fiddler now
How the boys called me the old night hawk
And them paying the fiddler now

It's later now, the guard has changed
One voice is clear and strong
He's singing a song of the old time range
I always did like that song
It takes me back to when I was young
And the memories run through my head
Of the times I've heard that old song sung
By voices now long dead

I used to shrink when I thought of the past
Some of the things that I've known
I took to drink but now at last
I'd far rather be alone
It's strange how quick a night goes by
When you live in the days of old
Up here there's only the horses and I
Up in the Pinnacles Bold

But I've lived my life and I took my chance
Regardless of law of vow
I played the game and I've had my dance
And I'm paying the fiddler now
How the boys called me the old night hawk
I'm paying the fiddler now

There in the East is the morning star
Shines with a fiery glow
Till it looks like the end of a big cigar
Ain't got too far to go
Just like the cowboys that make a flash
But they don't stand much of the run
They always bust in with a sweep and the dash

When most of the work is done

Well, I can see the East is getting grey
And I'll gather the horses soon
And faint from the valley far away
Comes the drone of the last guards tune
Yes life is just like the night herd song
As the years they come and they go
You start with a swing that's free and strong
But you finish up tired and slow

But I've lived my life and I took my chance
Regardless of law or vow
I played the game and I've had my dance
And I'm paying the fiddler now
How the boys called me the old night hawk
And I'm paying the fiddler now