

'Lighting up the Chiminea'

Richard Williams

So come on over, pull up a chair,
let us turn our backs on the dying of the sun.
Uncork the wine, flick open a beer,
as shadows deepen, our hair a younger shade,
years dissolving, downed in drink and laughter.
Let's mellow the dark in an orange glow,
worry lines lived will soon lift away,
a Chinese lantern in a midnight sky.

Soft memories of gold, of youth's easy sway.
We tilled the soil in which they were sowed,
a scattering of stones, this dusty earth,
this Hampshire chalk, these rolling fields,
these strengthening roots, see how they grew.
But we cut the wheat, we threshed the corn,
we milled the grain, we ground the flour,
we watched the past sift through our hands.

So come on over, pull up a chair,
let's harvest the years for we have stories to share,
a scattering of tales, this lusty earth,
of sinews tautening, of paunches sucked in,
the world we left, the stubble we burned.
In this flicker of light, before wood becomes ash,
before fire fades black, terracotta turns cold;
let words dance to our shadows for one last time.