The Chequered Flag (Dead or Alive)

Jethro Tull

The disc brakes drag,
the chequered flag sweeps across the oil-slick track.
The young man's home; dry as a bone.
His helmet off, he waves: the crowd waves back.
One lap victory roll. Gladiator soul.
The taker of the day in winning has to say,
Isn't it grand to be playing to the stand,
dead or alive.The sunlight streaks through the curtain cracks,
touches the old man where he sleeps.
The nurse brings up a cup of tea ---
two biscuits and the morning paper mystery.
The hard road's end, the white god's-send
is nearer everyday, in dying the old man says,
Isn't it grand to be playing to the stand,
dead or alive.The still-born child can't feel the rain
as the chequered flag falls once again.
The deaf composer completes his final score.
He'll never hear the sweet encore.
The chequered flag, the bull's red rag,
the lemming-hearted hordes
running ever faster to the shore singing,
Isn't it grand to be playing to the stand,
dead or alive.

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