

Rocky Mountain Runoff

Between pudding gray and barnyard brown,
The water rolls smooth through evening
Cool from its mountain source,
Life force to the desert prairies.

Breezing from the Rockies,
The summer winds stream
Barley tufts and heading wheat into
Fieldsful of shimmer, undulant ripples
Ripening seaswells of motion.

Eastward patches of sugarbeets sprout
Thick cauliflower leaves, rich green,
Their heavy white roots fattening
Towards harvest.

Clouds along the mountain rift
Reveal a clear thin line of gold
Silhouetting distant, hawk-sharp peaks
Staged by the lingering chinook arch.

As sunset brightens, the chill of dusk
Begins to settle like an unseen fog
From the bare sky over fallow fields.
Only a fluttering grasshopper breaks
The easing fluidity of wind,
The silent flow of darkening water,
The long-dying sun's luxurious descent.

—Jim Walker