

2008-2009  
CBC Writing Competition  
Senior Level Entry  
Category: Poetry  
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### Dust in Their Lungs

Anxious men hold their breath,  
wringing dusty hats between  
dry, calloused hands.  
A breeze picks up;  
shifts silently over windowsills  
in the otherwise still August night.  
But the air  
that rolls through the windows  
is heavier than normal...

In the houses,  
children stir in dreamless sleep  
and kick blankets aside in  
momentary discomfort.  
But just beyond their bedroom walls,  
prairies sway in anticipation,  
corn rustles in apprehension,  
humming cicadas fall silent,  
the breeze dies down.  
and a single drop of water  
falls to the dust.

It lands with a quiet plop,  
but the vast silence of the  
anticipating earth causes it to  
echo for hours.  
More drops follow, echo  
and melt away.  
Men exhale,  
put on their hats and  
whisper thanks to the skies above.