

# In Praise of Prairie

by [Theodore Roethke](#)

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The elm tree is our highest mountain peak;  
A five-foot drop a valley, so to speak.

A man's head is an eminence upon  
A field of barley spread beneath the sun.

Horizons have no strangeness to the eye.  
Our feet are sometimes level with the sky,

When we are walking on a treeless plain,  
With ankles bruised from stubble of the grain.

The fields stretch out in long, unbroken rows.  
We walk aware of what is far and close.

Here distance is familiar as a friend.  
The feud we kept with space comes to an end.

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