Brooklyn Boy Dreams of Iowa

Lauren K. Alleyne*
They are the salt of the earth
these people
with their cows and corn
wide open skies and spaces;
their knowledge earned
from the whispers of wind
bending green stalks,
undiluted by the flat chatter
of dead leaves.

They know their roots,
are solid, not grown broadly —
undernourished on the surface of skin;
theirs grow deep, through
fingers burrowing rich earth,
rough sleeves swiping salty beads
from weary brows,
hearts leaning over land, stirred
by the smell of soil.

At day’s end,
when tired spines stretch
relief toward the clouds
they are not lost;
instead, callused fingers
weave shade
for squinting eyes
to follow the sunset
home.