

“The Great Dust Storm” (Dust Storm Disaster)

By Woody Guthrie, from Dust Storm Ballads

On the 14th day of April of 1935,
There struck the worst of dust storms that ever filled the sky.
You could see that dust storm comin', the cloud looked deathlike black,
And through our mighty nation, it left a dreadful track.
From Oklahoma City to the Arizona line,
Dakota and Nebraska to the lazy Rio Grande,
It fell across our city like a curtain of black rolled down,
We thought it was our judgment, we thought it was our doom.

The radio reported, we listened with alarm,
The wild and windy actions of this great mysterious storm;
From Albuquerque and Clovis, and all New Mexico,
They said it was the blackest that ever they had saw.

From old Dodge City, Kansas, the dust had rung their knell,
And a few more comrades sleeping on top of old Boot Hill.
From Denver, Colorado, they said it blew so strong,
They thought that they could hold out, but they didn't know how long.

Our relatives were huddled into their oil boom shacks,
And the children they was cryin' as it whistled through the cracks.
And the family it was crowded into their little room,
They thought the world had ended, and they thought it was their doom.

The storm took place at sundown, it lasted through the night,
When we looked out next morning, we saw a terrible sight.
We saw outside our window where wheat fields they had grown
Was now a rippling ocean of dust the wind had blown.

It covered up our fences, it covered up our barns,
It covered up our tractors in this wild and dusty storm.
We loaded our jalopies and piled our families in,
We rattled down that highway to never come back again.