IN THE AUTUMN GRASS

Osca did not release them. "True, I fought the wonder-workers, but I fed myself. I have never asked the white man to put meat in my mouth, while I turned his counsels to mockery. Now I am facing a new road. It is a hard road. I've turned my back on the warpath. My guns are put away—this is now my weapon!" He laid a hand upon the plow. "You are too young to laugh at me. Where are your scars?" He waited a moment, grandly defiant, from his furrow. "Go!" he thundered. "When you have scars like these you may come to laugh at Osca. Away with you!" With a contemptuous gesture he dismissed them and turned to his work.

They wheeled their horses and rode away, crestfallen. In the blaze of the old man's angry eyes their insolence withered. Shame and fear filled their hearts. When they looked back Osca had resumed his heroic struggle with the plow.

**IN THE AUTUMN GRASS**

DID you ever lie low  
In the depth of the plain,  
In the lee of a swell that lifts,  
Like a low-lying island out of the sea,  
When the blue joint shakes  
As an army of spears;  
When each flashing wave breaks  
In turn overhead  
And wails in the door of your ears?

If you have, you have heard  
In the midst of the roar,  
The note of a lone gray bird,  
Blown slantwise by overhead  
As he swiftly sped  
To his south-land haven once more!

O, the music abroad in the air,  
With the Autumn Wind sweeping  
His hand on the grass, where  
The tiniest blade is astir, keeping  
Voice in the dim, wide choir,  
Of the infinite song, the refrain,  
The wild, sad wail of the plain!

*From "Prairie Songs"  
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--- Hamlin Garland.