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**CORNFIELDS, COTTONWOODS, SEAGULLS, AND SERMONS**  
*Growing up in Nebraska*

Poems by **Joseph Gascho**  
 DreamSeeker Poetry Series 14

**Summary:** How does driving a tractor at age five, irrigating corn, and reading a cartoon book about anatomy in a three-shelf-library one-room country school prepare one to become a physician? In this collection, poet-physician Joseph Gascho reflects on such questions.

"In the tradition of Seamus Heaney, these poems trace the arc of a life at once humble and grand—a boy coming of age against the backdrop of a land whose rhythms of work and worship remain touchstones of the man he becomes. Joseph Gascho renders the numinous earthiness of the Nebraska plains and the people who live there in frank, clear-eyed images that make the reader feel she knows the place."

—*Kimberly R. Myers, Associate Professor of Humanities, English, and Medicine, Penn State College of Medicine*

"Regardless of the author's age, a first book often reveals the source of the poet's voice, and Joseph Gascho's memoir in free verse is no exception. These poems trace a profound journey, reckoning both losses and gains that came of his family's move off a Nebraska farm for the boy's education. Savor a vanished world returned in these rich narratives of rural America, and meditate on the meanings of place—geographical, social, familial, and economic—migration, and cultural change.

—*Julia Spicher Kasdorf, Author, Shale Play (2018)*

"Sweeping from Nebraska to the East, childhood to maturity, farmsteads to hospital rooms, these poems render the moments, people, and places of Joseph Gascho's life with understated intensity. His lucid, vivid poems hum with curiosity and compassion."

—*Jeff Gundy, Author, Abandoned Homeland and Somewhere Near Defiance*

**Market:** Gascho's poems should appeal to anyone who appreciates fine poetry and is drawn to poems that memorably transmute growing up in Nebraska into literary art.

**Shelving:** Poetry; Anabaptist-Mennonite literature; Poetry—of growing up in Nebraska and the Midwest, cardiology, medicine, theological insights. BISAC: Poetry; RTM: 640 Poetry.

**The Author**

Joseph Gascho, Hummelstown, Pennsylvania, is a cardiologist at the Penn State Hershey College of Medicine. He grew up on a farm in Nebraska and moved with his father and mother to Virginia when he was 13. He presently practices medicine, reads echocardiograms, and teaches medical students. Many of his poems arise from his interactions with his patients and his viewing of medical images.

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