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Goldenrods

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Goldenrods

I was born on a prairie
but not this one.
There is goldenrod too
but not these:

Solidago serotina

Perennial—Nebraskan
Giant Goldenrod
Flowered namesake
of the good life's
lively prairie
turned amber as
Autumn creeps long
and days shorten.

Solidago canadensis

Northern—Rhizomatous
Canada Goldenrod
Growing in ditches
of Alberta's Peace Country.
I always thought
back then that
they, the goldenrods
were beautiful.

I ignored the prairie
for the easy
to see mountains.
But here, among
the golden brome
blown long by
the Anemoi trumpets
of the Great Plains
new light dawns
on the grasslands
of my memory.

CORY WILLARD grew up in northwestern Alberta and recently completed his Ph.D. in English Literary and Cultural Studies at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, where he taught writing and researched ecocriticism, fly fishing literature, and North American nature writing. His most recent publication is the essay “Glaciers, Embodiment, and the Sublime: An Ecocritical Approach to Thomas Wharton’s *Icefields*” in *Writing the Body in Motion: A Critical Anthology on Canadian Sport Literature* from Athabasca University Press.